Lancashire Growth Plan

PEOPLE, PLACES
AND POTENTIAL.

Figure 1 - Combined Authority areas in the North (both existing and in development)

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Foreword

Lancashire Flag

It’s Lancashire’s time.

In a world of rapid change and renewed leadership this Growth Plan sets out a bold vision for Lancashire’s future. It reaffirms our ambition, showcases our strengths, and highlights the unique role we can play in driving the UK’s national growth mission. It is a clear statement of what we aim to achieve, what we can deliver with our partners, and where collaboration with Government will help maximise success.

Economic growth is not the end goal for Lancashire - it is the means to realise our wider ambitions. A strong, productive economy is the engine that powers better life chances, and our people are the foundation on which that future is built. This Plan ensures our key sectors remain globally competitive, while our communities benefit from the opportunities that growth brings, creating good jobs, building skills, and improving quality of life across Lancashire.

Lancashire has a proud industrial heritage and continues to deliver some of the highest levels of productivity and export performance outside London. Today, we are a dynamic, forward-looking economy with both national and international relevance. Our unique energy assets, growing investments in defence, security, and technology, and our ability to reinvent traditional industries position us as a powerhouse of innovation and resilience. A key driver of this strength is the clustering of our high-value industry sectors, which fosters collaboration, accelerates innovation, and enhances our appeal to inward investors.

This Growth Plan aligns with the UK Government’s Industrial Strategy, focusing on shared priorities: creating good jobs, boosting innovation, and growing the economy sustainably. Our strengths in advanced engineering and manufacturing, clean energy, digital technology, and artificial intelligence reflect national ambitions and help turn innovation into real-world impact. We are also committed to working with neighbouring regions to widen opportunity and strengthen our collective economic footprint.

The Growth Plan sets out clear priorities for public and private investment, providing a roadmap to unlock Lancashire’s potential. It will guide how we target our own resources, improve local places, build new skills pathways, enhance connectivity, and create new opportunities for wealth and employment. The pipeline of projects identified in the Plan has the potential to attract over £20 billion in additional investment.

We will continue to work closely with the Lancashire Business Board to ensure this vision is delivered. We call on Government, investors, and partners to join us - back Lancashire’s ambition, invest in its future, and help us deliver a stronger, fairer, and more prosperous UK.

Cllr Stephen Atkinson
Leader of Lancashire County Council

Cllr Lynn Williams
Leader of Blackpool Council

Cllr Phil Riley
Leader of Blackburn with Darwen Council

The pipeline of projects has the potential to attract over £20 billion in additional investment.

As Chair of the Lancashire Business Board, I am delighted to endorse this Growth Plan for Lancashire, which places the voice of business at the heart of the new Combined County Authority.

Mo Isap Chair, Lancashire Business Board

This is the DNA we have brought to the development of the Lancashire Growth Plan, ensuring it both builds on existing sectors and assets yet also reflects what makes Lancashire distinctive and where a step change in performance is possible.

As Chair of the Lancashire Business Board, I am delighted to endorse this Growth Plan for Lancashire and the way in which the voice of business has been put at the heart of the new Combined County Authority.

Our Board has been extensively involved in the development of this Growth Plan and will continue to develop, define and reframe the document as we move into the delivery phase.

It is essential that the business perspective continues to inform not only this plan but also future strategies on transport, infrastructure, strategic development, and collaboration, ensuring Lancashire is well-positioned to attract new private investment in key growth sectors.

To support this ambition, the Growth Plan will be complemented by the development of a Lancashire Investment Prospectus. This document will articulate the nature of our investment propositions in greater detail, presenting the compelling case for potential investors and highlighting the strategic opportunities across our region.

Given the calibre of the businesses who have come together to form this Business Board, we are committed to leveraging our personal and business networks, using these plans as a guide, to facilitate and enhance key partnerships, introduce new investors, and broker deals that will advance our strategic ambition for the people, places and businesses of Lancashire.

Executive Summary

A Thriving Lancashire: A National Growth Priority

Lancashire is a powerhouse of potential, home to 1.57 million people[i], over 55,000 businesses, and contributing £40 billion in GVA[ii]. As one of the largest economies in the North, Lancashire is poised to take a leading role in driving national economic growth. With more than 728,000 jobs[iii], its economy is underpinned by world-class capabilities in advanced engineering, manufacturing, nuclear energy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and clean growth.A

This Growth Plan is the result of extensive collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders. It was launched at the 2025 Convention of the North in Preston, following a comprehensive consultation process involving sector groups, business organisations, individual enterprises, local authorities, universities, colleges, and Members of Parliament. This inclusive approach has shaped a bold and shared vision for Lancashire's future - one that is ambitious, equitable, and nationally significant.A

The newly formed Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) is dedicated to delivering transformative change. The LCCA will:

- Champion Lancashire's interests nationally and internationally.
- Deliver regional priorities through targeted investment in innovation, infrastructure, and workforce development.
- Strengthen inward investment strategies, making Lancashire a prime destination for global capital, venture funding, and industrial R&D.
- Ensure that economic growth benefits the communities that need it most.

Image: Convention of the North, Preston

Lancashire Cyber Education Week

Vision and Framework for Growth

Lancashire's vision is to **build upon the sector strengths outlined in this Plan to become a globally recognised, highly competitive, and sustainable region celebrated for its quality of life, connectivity, and opportunity**.
The Growth Plan outlines a clear strategy to achieve this by focusing on high-growth sectors that drive innovation and productivity, while also investing in the foundational pillars of success: transport, skills, housing, health, and innovation.

It also acknowledges the importance of foundational sectors such as public services, civil society, and health and social care.
The Plan promotes inclusive employment, cultural development, and community wellbeing as essential components of economic growth.
Initiatives like the evolving Get Lancashire Working programme aim to increase employment and ensure residents benefit directly from the region's prosperity.

Executive Summary

Our Framework for Growth

Economic Vision

Build upon our sector strengths to become a globally recognised, highly competitive, and sustainable region celebrated for its quality of life, connectivity, and opportunity

Sectoral Drivers of Growth:

Lancashire is home to the world's fourth largest aerospace cluster and plays a vital role in the UK's defence and security ecosystem.

Sectoral Drivers of Growth

Lancashire's economic future is anchored in a set of priority sectors with strong potential for international expansion. While not exhaustive of the region's diverse business base, these sectors are deeply embedded in Lancashire's economic identity and are central to driving productivity, innovation, and job creation. They also play a pivotal role in the broader North West and northern economic corridors.

A key strength lies in Lancashire's industrial clusters, concentrations of expertise and innovation that foster collaboration, accelerate growth, and enhance the region's appeal to investors.

A Strategic Role in National Security and Resilience

Lancashire is home to the world's fourth-largest aerospace cluster and plays a vital role in the UK's defence and security ecosystem. The county's capabilities in military aircraft production, nuclear fuel manufacturing, and emerging cyber technologies are major economic assets, closely aligned with the UK's Industrial Strategy.

By leveraging the shared technological foundations across these sectors, Lancashire is well-positioned to develop new industrial clusters where businesses, academia, and communities collaborate. This integrated model will drive innovation, strengthen national security, and generate new economic opportunities. Additionally, Lancashire's strong and sustainable rural economy plays a key role in UK food security, supporting a diverse supply chain from primary production to food manufacturing and retail.

Clean Growth and a Nuclear Renaissance

Lancashire is a national leader in nuclear energy, with expertise spanning the full lifecycle, from enrichment and fuel production to power generation. Combined with a skilled workforce and strategically located sites, the county is primed to lead the development of next-generation nuclear fuels and energy systems. The region is also advancing in energy storage and efficiency technologies, supporting both offshore and onshore renewables.

These capabilities not only bolster energy security but also provide affordable, sustainable power to other key sectors. With one of the UK's highest projected concentrations of green jobs between 2030 and 2050, Lancashire is poised to become a clean growth powerhouse.

Sustainable Digital and Artificial IntelligenceA

Digitalisation and AI are transforming every sector of the economy. While these technologies offer significant productivity gains, they also bring challenges such as high energy and water usage, workforce disruption, and cybersecurity threats.

Lancashire is uniquely positioned to lead in sustainable digital growth. The North West hosts the UK's second-largest cyber cluster, with over 300 companies and around 12,000 professionals[iv]. Lancashire benefits from transatlantic digital connectivity, access to renewable energy, and a central role in the emerging North West Cyber Corridor. This positions the county to harness AI-driven innovation, create high-value digital jobs, and address the environmental and social impacts of digital transformation.

Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence

With a proud industrial heritage, Lancashire remains a national leader in advanced engineering and manufacturing. The sector contributes around £6.4 billion to the local economy (18% of total GVA) and includes key industries such as aerospace, energy, chemicals, and commercial vehicles[v].

Lancashire's economic future is anchored in a set of priority sectors with strong potential for international expansion.

Executive Summary

The Growth Plan supports these sectors through a resilient supply chain of mid-sized firms known for their innovation and adaptability. These businesses are well-placed to develop the next generation of low-carbon, high-value products, reinforcing Lancashire's role in the UK's industrial future.

Culture and Tourism as Economic Catalysts

Culture and tourism are integral to Lancashire's identity and economic growth. These sectors attract talent, build community pride, and enhance quality of life. Blackpool, the UK's most visited seaside resort, draws around 20 million visitors annually and supports a £1.5 billion visitor economy.

Lancashire's tourism 'offer' spans vibrant towns, historic sites, and natural beauty. Since the launch of the Re(made) Cultural Strategy in 2020, the region has seen significant growth in cultural activity and infrastructure. The Growth Plan will build on this momentum, working with national partners such as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to unlock the full potential of Lancashire's cultural and tourism assets.

Lancashire is poised to become a clean growth powerhouse with one of the UK's highest projected concentrations of green jobs between 2030 and 2050.

Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

The Growth Plan identifies six strategic enablers that underpin Lancashire's ambition for a resilient, inclusive, and innovation-led economy:

1. **Infrastructure and Place Transformation**
   We will deliver a Lancashire Spatial Development Strategy that integrates transport, energy, housing, strategic employment sites, and the natural environment.
2. **Knowledge and Innovation Assets**
   We will unlock the full economic potential of Lancashire's research institutions, innovation hubs, and globally competitive business clusters.
3. **Business Growth and Enterprise**
   We will modernise the region's business support ecosystem by reviewing the position of the growth hub in respect of the national approach to business support.
4. **Skills for Growth and Inclusion**
   We will focus skills provision to meet business needs, inspire our future workforce, and drive inclusive growth.
5. **Health, Wellbeing, and Inclusive Communities**
   We will invest in health innovation, support pathways back into employment, and empower civil society and the VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) sector.
6. **Data and Evidence**
   We will build a robust data and intelligence infrastructure to guide decision-making, track progress, and support evidence-based policy development.

The Case for Growth: A Clear Evidence Base to Underpin the Growth Plan

Lancashire's Growth Plan is underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base, including key strategic documents such as the Lancashire Independent Economic Review (2022) and the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Plan (2023). Despite challenges such as an ageing population and economic inactivity, Lancashire's job density is sufficient to support its workforce.

The region's economic output is concentrated along key transport corridors, with significant opportunities in advanced engineering, high-productivity clusters, and innovation assets. Addressing connectivity gaps and investment constraints will be crucial to sustaining growth and enhancing productivity, positioning Lancashire to be able to fully contribute to the UK's economic ambitions.

Executive Summary

Lancashire's Emerging Growth Corridor Map

Key

- Motorway
- Rail line
- 50 % of Lancashire's population
- Complementary Strategic Sites – as listed in Appendix B
- Anchor Strategic Sites
- Main economic corridors
- Main University campus
- Ports
- Airport

Anchor Site

A Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone
B Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone Expansion
C Heysham Gateway
D Warton Enterprise Zone
E Preston Station Quarter
F Samlesbury Enterprise Zone
G Blackburn Growth Axis / Employment & Cyber Skills Campus
H Burnley Bridge and Burnley Bridge South
I Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan Employment Sites
J Lomeshaye Extension (Phase 2)

Note: This is a live and dynamic list of economic growth sites informed by a Lancashire Strategic Sites Report (Stantec, 2025). The sites demonstrate Lancashire's emerging economic corridors and will be developed further by the LCCA. The next steps for consideration by the LCCA include identifying where strategic housing sites and opportunities are emerging.

Spatial Priorities: Key Clusters and Corridors to Enhance Economic Connectivity and Collaboration

Lancashire's Growth Plan focuses on enhancing economic connectivity through key clusters and corridors. Central to this strategy is the Central Belt along the M55–M65 corridor, encompassing major employment zones and innovation assets in Blackpool, Preston, Blackburn, and Burnley. The emerging North–South Cyber Corridor further strengthens this area, linking Lancaster, Samlesbury, and Manchester.

The Plan aims to develop these corridors into cohesive economic zones, leveraging strengths and strategic transport routes. Addressing connectivity gaps and fostering collaboration with neighbouring regions is also crucial to unlocking Lancashire's full growth potential.

Executive Summary

Partnering with Government: Unlocking Lancashire's Growth Potential

The LCCA aims to unite local and national partners to champion the region's unique assets and unlock their full potential.

Local Commitment:

- Focus on delivering transformational growth through targeted investment in economic development, transport, and skills.
- Mobilise business leaders and local communities to promote Lancashire's strengths and attract investment.
- Invest in a data observatory to support evidence-led decision-making and align innovation capacity with industry needs.

Securing Government Partnerships:

- Lancashire seeks targeted policy and investment support to deliver the 12 transformational projects, which will accelerate growth and deliver nationally significant outcomes in the following areas and support:

1. National Recognition of Strategic Industrial Strengths:

- Support for key initiatives like the Global Combat Air Programme, Zero Emission HGV Supply Chain, AUKUS Submarine Programme, Rolls-Royce SMR Programme, and digital transformation across various sectors.

2. Strengthening the Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Supply Chain:

- Investment in a supply chain hub and STEAM centre of excellence.
- Support for SMEs to adopt digital technologies, diversify into new markets, and form international partnerships.
- Collaboration between academic institutions and industry to commercialise technologies.

3. Digital and Cyber Innovation:

- Investment to support the National Cyber Force HQ and associated programmes.
- Advancing place-based initiatives like the Blackburn Cyber and Skills Campus and expanding the Multiversity skills campus in Blackpool.

4. Energy Affordability and Clean Growth:A

- Investment in clean energy infrastructure to reduce business costs and support the transition to a low-carbon and capture economic benefits from home grown clean tech innovation.

5. Industries of the Future:

- Support for developing sovereign uranium enrichment capacity, transitioning to new nuclear at Heysham, advancing autonomous flight technologies, and more.A

6. Skills and Workforce Development:

- Continued support for the Lancashire Careers Hub and prioritisation of devolved funds for skills development.
- Strategic collaboration to ensure the workforce is equipped for future opportunities.

7. Transport Infrastructure:

- Upgrades to key road networks, development of a business case for a fourth River Ribble crossing, strategic rail improvements, and expansion of the Superbus network.

These initiatives aim to position Lancashire as a leader in innovation, industry, and sustainable growth.

Governance, Monitoring, and Evaluation

The Lancashire Growth Plan will be driven by the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) under new devolution arrangements, addressing underinvestment and promoting inclusive, sustainable growth. The LCCA will collaborate with businesses, local authorities, and public service providers to strengthen Lancashire's voice and develop investment propositions.

Success will be monitored through a performance management framework with key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress in economic growth, infrastructure, skills, quality of place, housing, and inclusive growth. Regular progress reports, stakeholder feedback, and adherence to budgets and timelines will ensure effective delivery.A

Growth Plan Projects Pipeline

The LCCA has worked with partners to develop a dynamic £20 billion plus pipeline of projects to implement the Growth Plan over the next decade. These initiatives include transformational (Appendix A) and wider Growth Plan projects (Appendix B – separate document), designed to deliver substantial economic, social, and environmental benefits. With the right support and investment, these projects will drive inclusive growth, foster innovation, and boost global competitiveness.

The LCCA has developed a robust approach to project development and prioritisation. This approach is closely aligned with the objectives of the Growth Plan and is grounded in credible economic analysis and HM Treasury Green Book principles. It will help provide a consistent framework in inform investment decisions across key themes such as transport and skills.

A Call to Action

Lancashire is not just ready for growth; it is actively driving it. We invite Government, investors, and partners to join us in delivering a stronger, fairer, and more prosperous region. Together, we can unlock Lancashire's full potential and power the next chapter of national economic success.

Section One

Introduction

University of Lancashire

Section One
Introduction

A Thriving Lancashire: A National Growth Priority

Lancashire plays a vital role in the UK's economic landscape. With a population of 1.57 million[vi] and a Gross Value Added (GVA) of £40 billion[vii], it stands as one of the largest and most dynamic economies in the North. Home to over 55,000 businesses and supporting more than 740,000 jobs[viii], Lancashire's economy is powered by strengths in advanced engineering, manufacturing, nuclear energy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and sustainable industries.A

The Lancashire Growth Plan sets out a bold vision for the county's economic future at a pivotal moment. Local leaders, businesses, and investors are working together to position Lancashire as a global hub for innovation, inward investment, and economic resilience. Key to this ambition is the Lancashire Innovation Plan[ix] which ensures that investment is focused on high-impact, technology-driven sectors.

The creation of the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) marks a new chapter in devolved leadership. The LCCA will:

- Champion Lancashire's interests nationally and internationally.
- Deliver regional priorities through targeted investment in innovation, infrastructure, and workforce development.
- Strengthen inward investment strategies, making Lancashire a prime destination for global capital, venture funding, and industrial R&D.
- Ensure that economic growth benefits the communities that need it most.

The Growth Plan focuses on a subset of Lancashire's economy that aligns with the UK Government's Industrial Strategy and offers significant potential to contribute to national growth. Lancashire's unique blend of sectoral strengths forms a distinctive economic model. This includes a dual approach: supporting established industries while nurturing high-growth, high-tech enterprises, including university spin-outs and spin-ins.

While the Plan prioritises high-growth sectors, it also recognises the importance of foundational and structurally significant industries such as public services, civil society, and health and social care. It supports investment in culture, health, transport, skills, and housing as essential enablers of economic success. The evolving Get Lancashire Working programme aims to raise employment levels and ensure that local people benefit directly from economic growth.A

The pipeline of projects identified in the Plan has the potential to attract over **£20 billion in additional investment** over the next decade, transforming Lancashire's economy and making a substantial contribution to the UK's national growth ambitions.

This Plan places Lancashire at the heart of the UK's future prosperity.

National Context

The Growth Plan is fully aligned with the UK's national growth agenda. It directly supports the Government's Industrial Strategy, the Devolution White Paper, and the Get Britain Working Green Paper.

With economic growth as a national priority, this Plan places Lancashire at the heart of the UK's future prosperity. The 2025 Spending Review reinforces this alignment, with significant funding commitments in defence, social housing, transport, and the energy transition, all of which support Lancashire's strategic priorities.

By focusing on job creation, innovation, and sustainable growth, the Growth Plan complements the UK's Industrial Strategy.

Lancashire's strengths in advanced engineering and manufacturing, clean energy, digital technology, and AI mirror national priorities. Through targeted investment in skills, infrastructure, and enterprise, the Plan transforms ideas into real-world impact, supporting both economic and environmental goals.

By building on its core strengths, Lancashire is helping to shape the UK's future success.

Government's Growth Mission: Rebuild Britain

National Priorities	Growth Plan Sections
Investment Infrastructure and Planning Higher public and private investment, improved infrastructure like transport and planning reform.	Infrastructure and Place Transformation (Section Five)
Place Regional growth through investment, devolution and reform, and support for house building.	Infrastructure and Place Transformation (Section Five)
People More people in good jobs, improved employment prospects, skills and productivity.	Skills for Growth and Inclusion (Section Five)
Industrial Strategy and Trade An Industrial strategy and a Trade Strategy to bolster growth-driving sectors and free open trade.	Business Growth and Enterprise (Section Five)
Innovation Support for scientific breakthroughs, R&D, and the diffusion of technologies, including AI.	Knowledge and Innovation Assets (Section Six)
Net Zero Net Zero delivered in a way that supports growth and captures economic opportunities.	An Economy Driving Clean Growth and a Nuclear Renaissance (Section Two)
Economic and Fiscal Stability Macroeconomic and financial stability, fiscal sustainability and policy certainty.	–

Based on: An overarching Framework for Governments Growth Mission, Budget papers, October 2024

Section One
Introduction

LCCA Strategic Approach

The Lancashire Growth Plan sits at the heart of the LCCA's emerging strategic approach. It serves as the central organising document that aligns local ambition with national priorities, guiding investment, policy, and partnership activity across the county.

This model integrates a range of interconnected strategies and ensures that all parts of the system are working together to deliver inclusive, sustainable, and high-impact growth.

The requirement for the Economic Growth, Transport and Skills Advisory Boards to support this work is set out in their Terms of Reference, reinforcing their role in shaping and delivering the Growth Plan's priorities.

Integration will be further strengthened through the development of a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS), described in Section Five. The SDS will sit alongside a coordinated approach to prioritising economic growth, skills development, and transport investment, ensuring decisions are joined-up and focused on unlocking Lancashire's full potential.

The diagram on the right illustrates how the Growth Plan integrates with and supports the wider strategic model being developed by the LCCA.

"The Growth Plan sets a bold direction for Lancashire. By aligning economic, transport, and skills priorities, we're creating the conditions for innovation, investment, and long-term success."

Chair of the Economic Growth Advisory Board

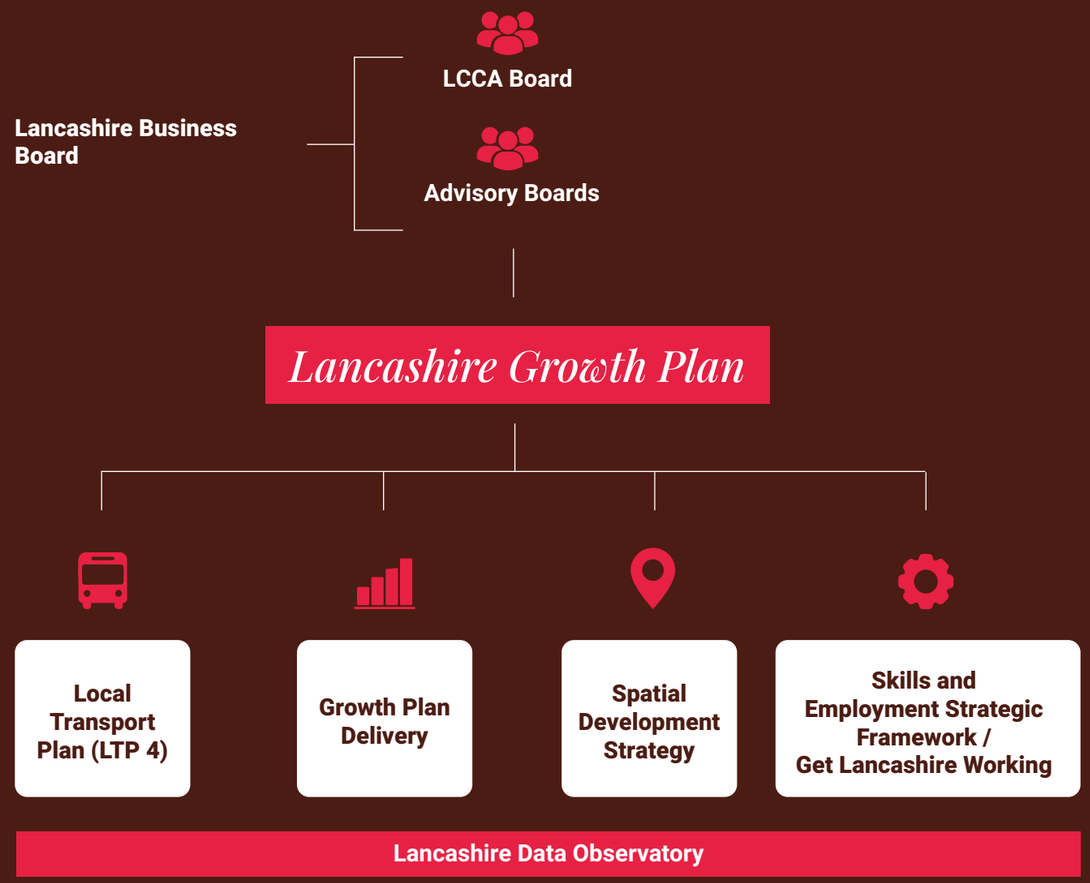
"The Lancashire Growth Plan sets a clear direction for our economy, and the Skills Advisory Board is committed to ensuring our workforce is ready to meet that ambition. We will continue to align our skills strategies with the Plan's priority sectors to maximise opportunity for all."

Chair of the Skills Advisory Board

"Transport is a key enabler of economic growth. We are working closely through the County Combined Authority to ensure that Lancashire's transport infrastructure enables the ambitions set out in the Growth Plan.

The LCCA also allows us to speak with a stronger, unified voice in forums such as Transport for the North, helping to champion Lancashire's priorities more effectively at a regional and national level."

Chair of the Transport Advisory Board



Section Two

Vision and Framework for Growth

Defining Lancashire's Vision for a Competitive and Sustainable Economy

Lancashire's vision is to build upon its strengths in national security, clean growth and nuclear, digital, advanced engineering, culture and tourism to become a globally recognised, highly competitive, and sustainable region celebrated for its quality of life, connectivity, and opportunity.

With the right investment, devolved powers, and collaborative leadership, Lancashire will evolve into:

- A region with the industrial capacity and innovation ecosystem to host, accelerate, and scale technologies for future markets.
- A national exemplar of how diverse, dynamic communities can drive inclusive growth and attract global investment.
- A place that retains and attracts skilled talent through a compelling mix of affordability, opportunity, and lifestyle.
- A region where strategic leadership and targeted investment deliver prosperity in the communities that need it most.

A Framework for Growth

Lancashire's economic growth strategy is built around high-potential sectors that align with national priorities and regional strengths. These sectors offer targeted opportunities for innovation, investment, and job creation.
By focusing on these areas, Lancashire will harness its unique capabilities to deliver both local transformation and national impact.

Key drivers of growth include:

- A business base with the agility to apply core competencies to emerging technologies, creating new products and services for domestic and global markets.
- The ability to onshore and secure sovereign capabilities in a rapidly changing global landscape.
- Strategic advantages rooted in natural resource connectivity and geographic positioning.
- A robust research and innovation ecosystem, powered by world-class universities and institutions that fuel business growth and technological advancement.

While advanced engineering and manufacturing (AEM) remain central to Lancashire's economy, the Plan recognises the need to diversify and future-proof the region. Digitisation and automation are reshaping employment demands, and emerging sectors such as cybersecurity are creating new opportunities for knowledge-based jobs, higher incomes, and integrated innovation, such as the development of cyber-physical systems.

Section Two
Vision and Framework for Growth

Sectoral Drivers of Growth

The following sectoral priorities reflect Lancashire's unique economic strengths:

- Priority One - A Strategic Role in National Security and Resilience
- Priority Two - Clean Growth and a Nuclear Renaissance
- Priority Three - Sustainable Digital and Artificial Intelligence
- Priority Four Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence
- Priority Five - Culture and Tourism as Economic Catalysts

Our Framework for Growth

Economic Vision

Build upon our sector strength to become a globally recognised, highly competitive, and sustainable region celebrated for its quality of life, connectivity, and opportunity

Sectoral Drivers of Growth:

Priority 1 National Security and Resilience	**Priority 2** Clean Growth and Nuclear	**Priority 3** Sustainable Digital and AI	**Priority 4** Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing	**Priority 5** Culture and Tourism

Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers
- Infrastructure and Place Transformation
- Knowledge and Innovation Assets
- Business Growth and Enterprise
- Skills for Growth and Inclusion
- Health, Wellbeing, and Inclusive Communities
- Data and Evidence

Growth Plan Projects as outlined in the document

Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Beyond sector-specific opportunities, Lancashire's long-term success depends on a set of cross-cutting enablers that support inclusive, resilient, and innovation-led growth:

1. Infrastructure and Place Transformation

We will deliver a Lancashire Spatial Development Strategy that integrates transport, energy, housing, strategic employment sites, and the natural environment.

2. Knowledge and Innovation Assets

We will unlock the full economic potential of Lancashire's research institutions, innovation hubs, and globally competitive business clusters.

3. Business Growth and Enterprise

We will modernise the region's business support ecosystem by reviewing the position of the growth hub in respect of the national approach to business support.

4. Skills for Growth and Inclusion

We will focus skills provision to meet business needs, inspire our future workforce, and drive inclusive growth.

5. Health, Wellbeing, and Inclusive Communities

We will invest in health innovation, support pathways back into employment, and empower civil society and the VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) sector.

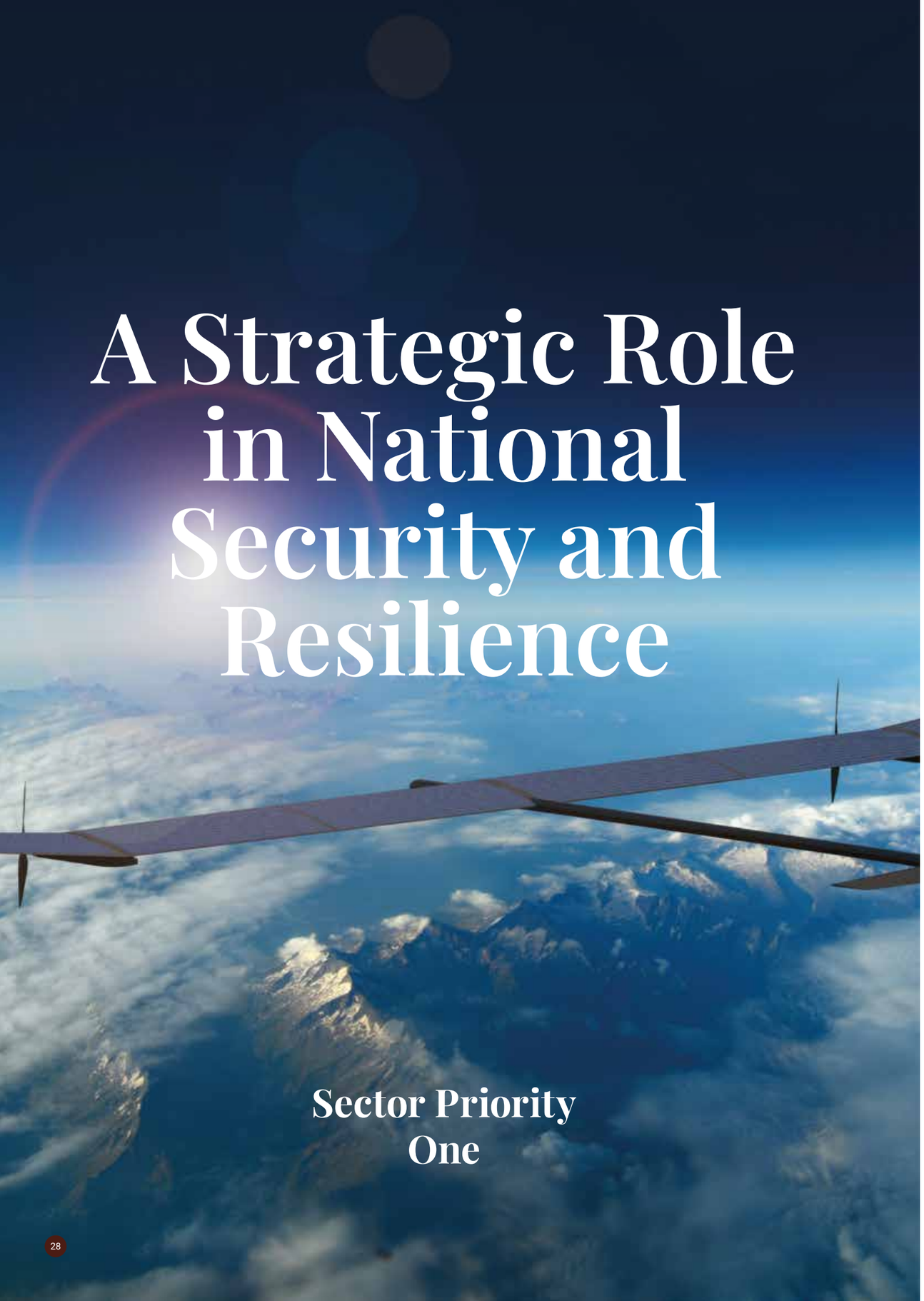
6. Data and Evidence

We will build a robust data and intelligence infrastructure to guide decision-making, track progress, and support evidence-based policy development.

Each enabler is designed to support multiple sectors, creating a resilient and interconnected growth ecosystem.

Growth Plan Projects

The projects set out in the Appendices are central to delivering the ambitions set out in this Growth Plan. These initiatives are designed to unlock productivity, attract investment, and create high-quality jobs across the region. They reflect the Growth Plan's commitment to inclusive and sustainable growth by enhancing connectivity, accelerating clean energy innovation, expanding access to advanced skills, and regenerating key places. Together, the projects form a powerful portfolio of interventions that will shape Lancashire's future and deliver long-term benefits for communities, businesses, and the wider UK economy.



A Strategic Role in National Security and Resilience

Sector Priority One

The county is uniquely positioned to contribute to the UK's Industrial Strategy and the objectives set out in the Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper Refresh (2023). These strategies emphasise sovereign capability, innovation, and regional resilience, areas where Lancashire excels.

The region's contribution extends beyond defence to include energy and food security, underpinned by a robust, sustainable rural economy and a network of innovative collaborations.

Lancashire's industrial base is not only vital to national resilience but also serves as a powerful economic engine for the North West and the UK as a whole.

Defence Sectoral Strengths and Specialisms

Lancashire continues to underpin the UK's defence and resilience infrastructure. The UK's ability to build military aircraft, produce nuclear fuel, and develop cutting-edge cyber capabilities is centred in the county. These industries are aligned with the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy (DSIS), which prioritises domestic capability and supply chain security.

According to Oxford Economics (2023)[x], BAE Systems' military air sector, largely based in Lancashire:

- Contributed over £5 billion to UK GDP, with £2.6 billion in exports and £220 million in tax revenues.
- Supported nearly 70,700 jobs across the UK, including 20,000 in the North West.
- Partnered with 1,400 UK suppliers, returning nearly £2.5 billion to UK businesses.
- Employed approximately 69% of its workforce in engineering or engineering-related roles, with productivity 15% above the UK average.
- Supported over 900 apprentices and 320 graduates in 2023, with plans to recruit an additional 300 early-career professionals across its Samlesbury and Warton sites.

Nationally, the UK defence sector employed approximately 83,889 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers in 2022, a 1.7% increase from 2021. Of these, 54,000 jobs were supported by domestic defence revenue and 30,000 by international revenue. The North West accounted for 22,298 of these FTEs, with an average salary of £43,738, well above the national manufacturing average[xi].

Innovation and Research

Lancashire is home to several major defence and cyber innovation programmes that align with national strategic priorities:

- **F-35 Lightning II Programme:** A multinational initiative led by the US, with BAE Systems holding a 13–15% workshare per aircraft. Over 1,000 rear fuselage assemblies have been delivered to Lockheed Martin[xii].
- **Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP)**: A trilateral collaboration between the UK, Japan, and Italy to develop a next-generation combat air system, including the Tempest crewed aircraft and advanced support systems.
- **National Cyber Force HQ**: Set to be permanently based in Samlesbury from 2025, this joint initiative between the Ministry of Defence and GCHQ will support around 2,000 personnel and generate an estimated 3,120 direct and indirect jobs[xiii]. The Lancashire Cyber Partnership is embedding the NCF within the local economy to drive innovation and job creation.
- **AUKUS Supply Chain**: The SSN-AUKUS submarine programme, a trilateral initiative between the UK, US, and Australia, will replace the Astute class submarines. With manufacturing set to begin later this decade, the programme is expected to peak at 12,000 employees and drive significant infrastructure investment and supply chain development.

Image: PHASA-35 Solar electric unmanned, high altitude air vehicle (BAE Systems)

Sector Priority One
A Strategic Role in National Security and Resilience

Key Locations and Infrastructure

Lancashire's defence and security ecosystem is anchored by a network of strategic sites:

- **Samlesbury and Warton:** Home to BAE Systems' advanced aerospace operations.
- **MOD Blackpool:** A growing hub for Defence Business Services.
- **Safran and Rolls Royce:** Key contributors to aerospace and propulsion technologies.

These locations are highlighted in the Defence Manufacturing Employment Distribution Map.

Key

Defence Employment by Ward Source: Business Register and Employment Survey Lancashire Electoral Wards, 2023

Defence Employment

- 0 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 50
- 50 - 100
- 100 - 200
- 200+

Sector Priority One
A Strategic Role in National Security and Resilience

Case Study:
MOD Strategic Relocation to Blackpool

The Ministry of Defence's relocation of over 1,000 Defence Business Services (DBS) roles to Blackpool represents a major investment in national resilience and local regeneration. A new 53,000 sq. ft. purpose-built office within the Talbot Gateway Central Business District will consolidate DBS operations into a single, MOD-owned site. This move secures long-term civil service jobs, delivers taxpayer savings, and supports the MOD's £5.1 billion Defence Estate Optimisation programme.

Delivered in partnership with Blackpool Council, Muse Places, VINCI Building, and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, the project began in May 2025 and is scheduled for completion in 2027.

Transformational Projects

- Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and Innovation Hub: Adjacent to BAE Systems and home to the AMRC North West, this site supports advanced engineering, manufacturing, cyber, and robotics. It anchors a wider innovation ecosystem, including the National Cyber Force and regional cyber clusters.
- Warton Enterprise Zone and the University of Lancashire Altitude Facility: This future aviation and space technology cluster hosts one of Europe's largest indoor UAS testing environments. It supports the development of next-generation aerospace, defence, and cyber technologies, driving regional STEM talent development and attracting international investment.

Lancashire plays a pivotal role in supporting the UK's national security and resilience, with nationally significant strengths in military aircraft production, nuclear fuel manufacturing and cyber capabilities.

Rural Economy and Food Security

With 80% of its land classified as rural, Lancashire's natural assets are fundamental to the strength and resilience of its agri-food economy. The county supports a diverse and integrated supply chain, from primary production, horticulture, livestock, seafood, food and drink manufacturing, logistics, retail, and tourism. This robust production capacity and vibrant rural economy makes Lancashire a nationally significant contributor to the UK's food security / food resilience.

West Lancashire is nationally significant for horticulture, producing approximately 20% of England's field vegetables and salad crops, making it one of the most productive regions outside the Fens. Across the county, the food and agriculture sector supports over 70,000 jobs and contributes more than £2 billion in GVA, representing 10.8% of Lancashire's workforce, more than double the national average[xiv].

Lancashire has successfully attracted global food and drink brands while nurturing a thriving ecosystem of home-grown enterprises. From West Lancashire's salad growers and the Fylde Coast's seafood industry, farms and dairies across Ribble Valley and Trough of Bowland, to major manufacturers across the county, local ingredients flow into national supply chains, serving everything from high-end restaurants to supermarkets, schools, and the visitor economy.

Sectoral Strengths and Innovation

Lancashire is home to world-class educational and research institutions that are driving innovation in agri-tech and sustainable food systems, not only improving productivity and resilience within our food chain but also creating a circular economy impacting on the use of natural resources in the region which has benefits beyond the food sector. These include Myerscough College near Preston, a national leader in agricultural education, applied farming research and land-based expertise; the Lancaster Environment Centre, one of the world's largest environmental research centres; Edge Hill University's Greenhouse Innovation Consortium and Plant Science unit, which addresses plant production challenges across the North West; and the University of Lancashire, which is advancing the "One Health" approach by integrating human and animal health innovation.

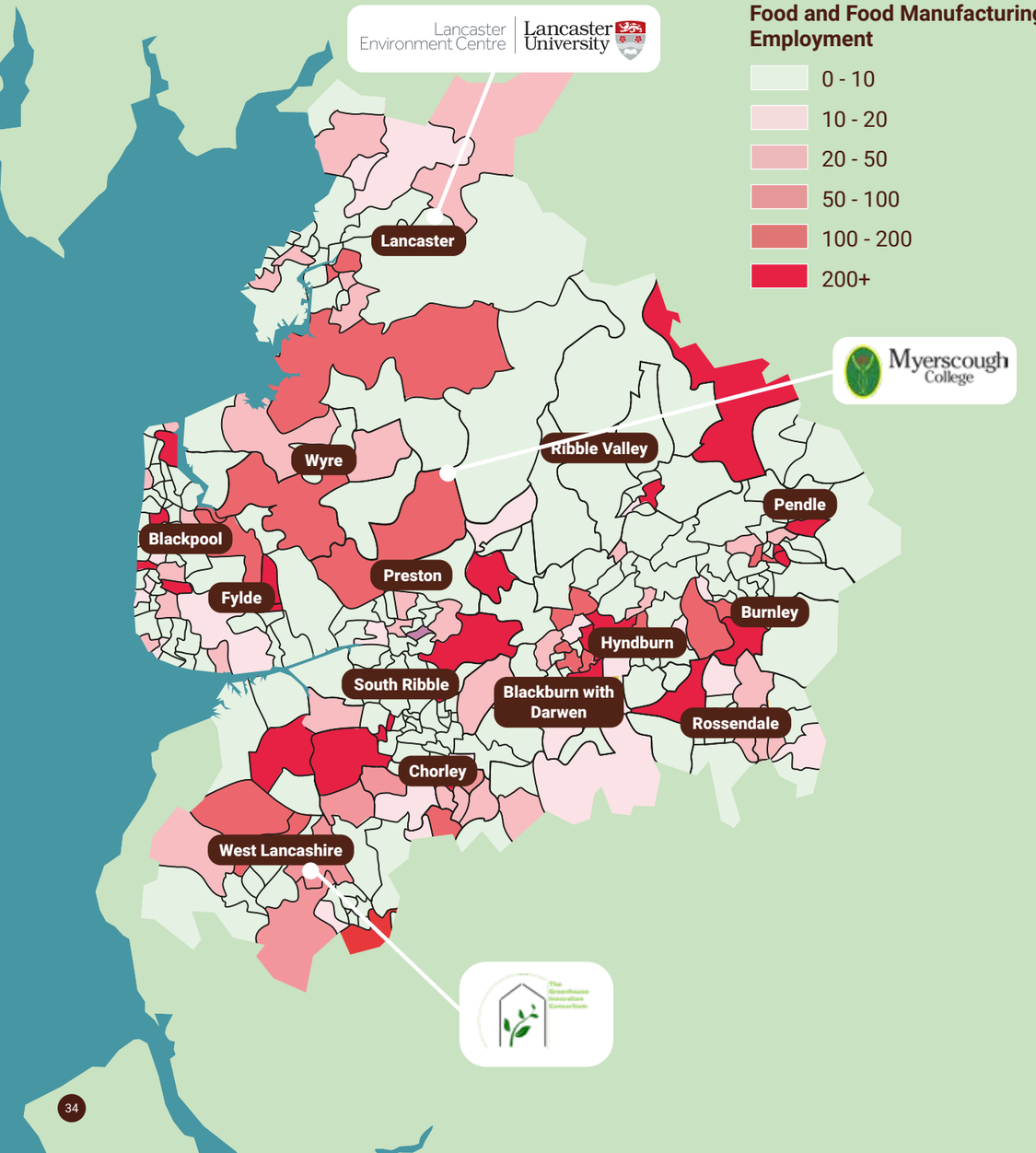
These assets, combined with Lancashire's cross-sector strengths in advanced engineering, cleantech, low-carbon technologies, drone systems, and data science, provide a strong foundation for a modern, sustainable, and high-value agri-food industry. This will not only enhance national food security but also drive exports, stimulate innovation, and attract inward investment.

Key Locations and Infrastructure

Lancashire's food and agriculture sector is supported by a network of strategic institutions and innovation centres. The Food Security Employment Distribution Map highlights key locations such as Lancaster University's Environment Centre, Myerscough College, and the ECHoLiGHT facility as part of the Greenhouse Innovation Consortium at Edge Hill University. These institutions form the backbone of Lancashire's rural innovation ecosystem. The following locations are highlighted on the map on the next page: Lancashire University's Environment Centre, Myerscough College and the Greenhouse Innovation Centre.

Sector Priority One
A Strategic Role in National Security and Resilience

Food Security Employment Distribution



Key

Food Manufacturing Employment by Ward Source: Business Register and Employment Survey Lancashire Electoral Wards, 2023

Food and Food Manufacturing Employment

- 0 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 50
- 50 - 100
- 100 - 200
- 200+

Case Study: Butlers Cheeses Campus

BUTLERS
FARMHOUSE CHEESES

Following a fire in 2024, Butlers Cheeses, a fourth-generation, family-run cheesemaker based in rural Lancashire, announced the development of a new, state-of-the-art cheesemaking campus. This facility will be among the most advanced farmhouse operations in the UK, designed to foster innovation while remaining rooted in the local landscape. The project will create a wide range of skilled jobs and has already led to a 40% reduction in food miles through the engagement of additional local suppliers.

Growth Plan Projects supporting Food Security

The Greenhouse Innovation Centre at Edge Hill University and the Rural Innovation Centre at Myerscough College and University Centre are complementary projects designed to boost Lancashire's food and agriculture strengths. These initiatives will support applied research, skills development, and enterprise growth in the agri-food sector, helping to future-proof the rural economy and align with national priorities for food security and net zero.

Butler's Farmhouse Cheese

The Greenhouse Innovation Consortium

The Greenhouse Innovation Consortium and Rural Innovation Centre will strengthen Lancashire's agri-food sector, supporting food security and rural economic growth.

Clean Growth and a Nuclear Renaissance

Sector Priority Two

Lancashire is well positioned to lead the UK's clean growth agenda through its strengths in clean energy production, nuclear innovation, and advanced low-carbon technologies. The county's capabilities span the full nuclear lifecycle and are supported by strategic assets, a skilled workforce, and world-class research institutions.

The presence of Springfields Nuclear Fuels (Westinghouse Electric UK), the National Nuclear Laboratory in Preston, and Heysham Power Stations (EDF) underpins Lancashire's role in supporting the UK's refreshed nuclear fleet. The potential for private investment in Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), alongside energy-intensive industries such as chemicals and data centres, further strengthens Lancashire's position as a hub for 24/7 low-carbon power generation.

Beyond nuclear, Lancashire benefits from proximity to offshore wind assets in the Irish Sea. These assets contribute to energy security and offer cost-effective power to support the competitiveness of other key sectors.

Lancashire's advanced engineering and manufacturing (AEM) base is also well-placed to diversify into low-carbon goods and services, supporting the broader green economy.

Lancashire is well positioned to lead the UK's clean growth agenda through its strength in nuclear innovation, low carbon technologies and 24/7 clean energy generation.

Sectoral Strengths and Specialisms

Lancashire's nuclear capabilities are nationally significant. According to the Nuclear Industry Association's 2023 Oxford Economics study[xv]:

- The nuclear sector has a GVA multiplier of 2.6, generating £1.60 in additional value for every £1 added.
- GVA per worker is £95,300 (£102,300 FTE), nearly double the UK median.
- The sector contributes £16.1 billion in GVA, supports 211,500 jobs, and generates £7.1 billion in tax revenue.
- The North West accounts for £3.9 billion in GVA and 50,000 jobs.
- Nearly half of civil nuclear employment is in areas identified as high priority for investment, helping to reduce regional disparities.
- Operational power stations typically employ around 550 full-time staff with wage bills of £50–60 million.

Lancashire's nuclear expertise also extends to health and nuclear medicine, with applications ranging from diagnostics and imaging to advanced cancer therapies.

Innovation and Research

Lancashire is home to clusters of innovation in:

- Micro-hydro and Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS)
- Flexible solar and compressed air energy storage
- Thermal and solid-state sodium battery technologies
- Electric vehicle (EV) battery manufacturing with global supply chain links

Image: Springfields, near PrestonA

Sector Priority Two
Clean Growth and a Nuclear Renaissance

With capabilities spanning the full nuclear lifecycle, Lancashire is central to the UK's next generation energy strategy.

Heysham 1

The region is also exploring the role of hydrogen in storing renewable energy for industrial use, supported by ideal geological conditions for underground storage on the Lancashire Plain.

Strategic Opportunities and Future Growth

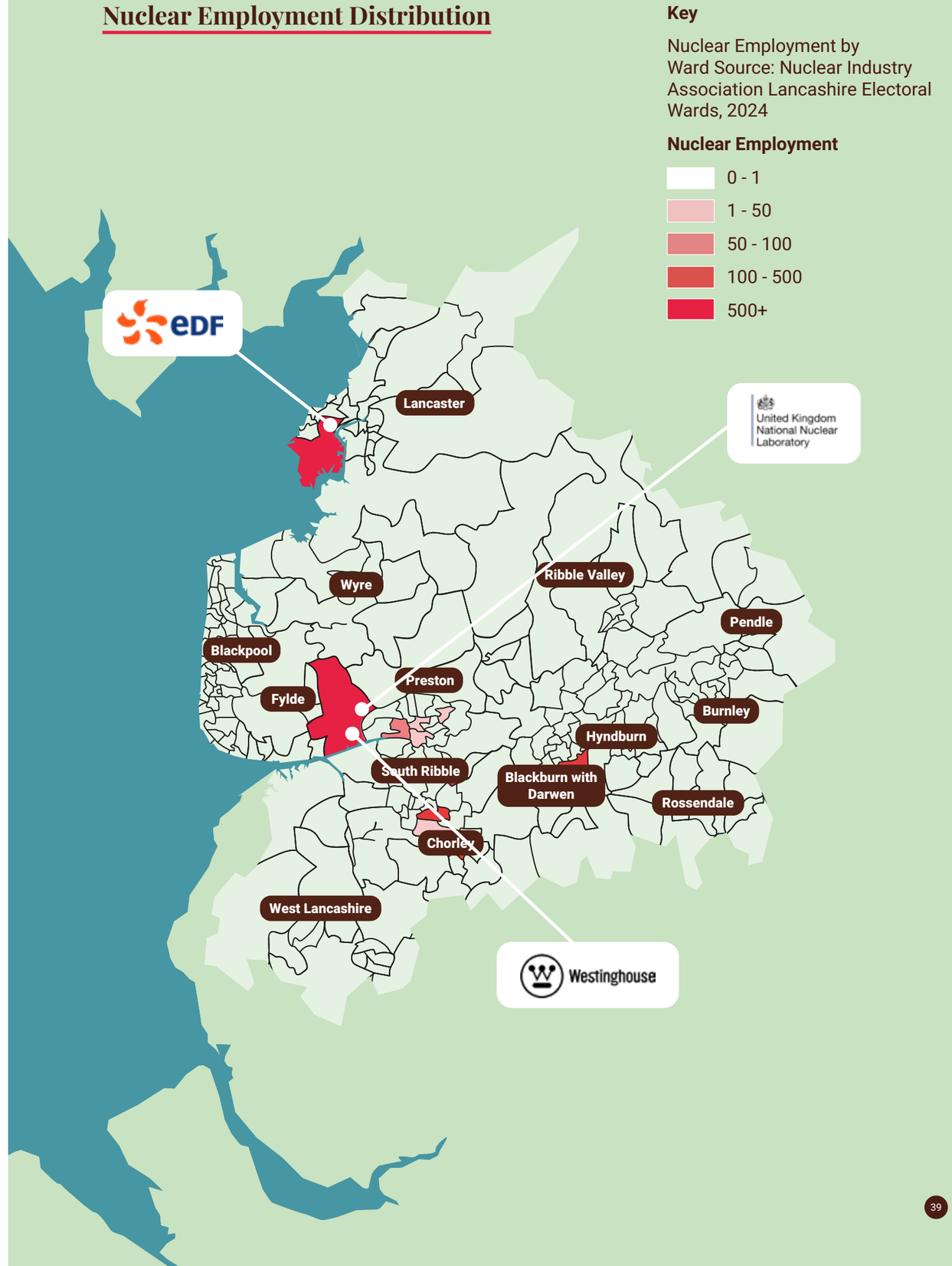
Lancashire is well-placed to support the development of Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs), which operate at higher temperatures and can decarbonise broader energy systems. These reactors require High Assay Low Enriched Uranium (HALEU), currently only commercially available from Russia. With Capenhurst already engaged in enrichment processes, the Westinghouse facility at Springfields presents a strategic opportunity to re-establish UK-based HALEU production.

East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce has supported businesses innovating new low carbon products and technologies, through the sector support group RedCAT, highlighting opportunities for diversification and green job creation. The major planned offshore wind farms in the Irish Sea provide a huge opportunity which is being exploited by the Silicon Sands AI Growth Zone at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, and the proposed Gateway for Clean Energy Project, centred on Fleetwood. The Hillhouse Enterprise Zone complements these efforts by seeking to align local regeneration with this opportunity to secure long-term socio-economic benefits from clean energy infrastructure and strengthen Lancashire's role in the UK's net zero transition.

Key Locations and Infrastructure

Nuclear Employment Distribution Map: Highlights key sites including EDF (Heysham), the National Nuclear Laboratory (Preston), and Springfields (Westinghouse UK).

Nuclear Employment Distribution



Sector Priority Two
Clean Growth and a Nuclear Renaissance

Case Study: CAGE Technologies

CAGE Technologies develops sustainable power solutions with their Clean Air Gas Engine (CAGE) technology, which replaces diesel engines with low-emission alternatives like biogas and hydrogen. Their systems integrate with renewable energy sources such as solar and wind to provide clean, net-zero power. Supported through the low carbon sector network RedCAT, CAGE has received R&D funding from Innovate UK, the MOD Centre for Defence Enterprise (CDE), and BEIS to advance their clean energy innovations.

Transformational Projects

- **Heysham Nuclear Power Stations**: Operated by EDF, these coastal stations are vital to the UK's energy mix and future nuclear investments, including new reactor technologies, grid stability, and clean hydrogen production.
- **Springfields Site (Westinghouse UK)**: Located near Preston, this site is crucial for nuclear fuel manufacturing and supports the development of HALEU for next-generation reactors. It is central to the UK's nuclear supply chain and export strategy.

Springfields Site, AGR final assemblyA

Sustainable Digital and Artificial Intelligence

Sector Priority Three

Lancashire is poised to lead the development of a responsible, inclusive, and sustainable digital economy. Leveraging its access to green energy and its strategic position within the emerging North West Cyber Corridor, the county is well-placed to drive productivity, create high-value employment, and deliver transformative growth through artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and cyber technologies.

The digitisation of the economy and the rise of AI are reshaping every sector. While these technologies offer significant opportunities, they also present challenges, including high energy and water demands, workforce displacement, and increased cyber vulnerability. Lancashire's unique combination of digital connectivity, access to low-carbon power, and growing cyber infrastructure positions it to address these challenges and lead the UK's digital transition.

Sectoral Strengths and Specialisms

Major industries across the county are already adopting AI, big data analytics, cryptography, and human-machine interaction to enhance productivity and develop innovative products and services. A key opportunity lies in scaling up the use of robotics and cobotics, enabled by AI, to increase industrial productivity, strengthen supply chain resilience, and address the challenges of an ageing population, workforce decline, and persistent skills gaps.

Lancashire's digital and AI ecosystem is underpinned by:

- Access to sustainable, low-cost energy to power data centres and digital infrastructure.
- A growing cyber security cluster as part of the North West Cyber Corridor.
- Strong university-industry collaboration driving innovation and commercialisation.
- A commitment to inclusive growth, ensuring digital transformation benefits all communities.A

Innovation and Research

Lancashire's universities are at the forefront of digital innovation, providing research excellence, business support, and skills development:

- **Lancashire Universities Innovation Programme (LUIP)** connects businesses with R&D expertise, helping SMEs secure Innovate UK funding and scale through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.
- **Edge Hill University (EHU)** hosts the SME Productivity and Innovation Centre, recognised by the ScaleUp Institute. Its Innovation Sprint Programme has delivered a £13.1 million return on government investment. EHU's research focuses on technology adoption to boost productivity, with new initiatives supporting the professional business services sector and a recently launched Behavioural Insights service.
- **University of Lancashire's Cyber Solutions Centre** acts as a digital hub, applying cyber technologies across sectors such as health, policing, and public safety.
- **Lancaster University** has received over £12 million from Research England's Expanding Excellence in England Fund to enhance its capabilities in mathematics, statistics, and AI. This research supports applications in epidemic modelling, environmental science, aerospace, data science, and cyber security.
- **AMRC North West** plays a pivotal role in industrial digital transformation, offering cutting-edge capabilities in cyber, AI, 5G connectivity, haptics, and knowledge capture to support manufacturing innovation at scale.
- **Further Education Colleges and the Institute of Technology** have invested in cyber attack and defence laboratories, helping to create progression pathways into digital careers.

Image: AMRC NW

Sector Priority Three
Sustainable Digital and Artificial Intelligence

The LCCA will leverage its extensive networks across public (including emergency services), private, and academic sectors to identify and gather real-world use cases of artificial intelligence (AI) within the region. By mapping these applications, the LCCA will build a clearer picture of how AI is currently driving innovation and productivity across Lancashire's key industries.

In collaboration with the county's knowledge base, including universities, research centres, and innovation hubs, the LCCA will support the development of tailored AI solutions that address local challenges, enhance service delivery, and unlock new economic opportunities.

Key Locations and Infrastructure

Digital Employment Distribution Map: Highlights key assets including Fraser House, Electech Cluster, National Cyber Force and Strawberry Fields.

Case Study: Fraser House

Located in Lancaster's White Cross Business Park, this co-working hub for tech and digital businesses was transformed with a £1.5 million investment by Lancashire County Council. It has helped members raise £37 million in venture capital and is a cornerstone of Lancashire's tech ecosystem.

Transformational Projects

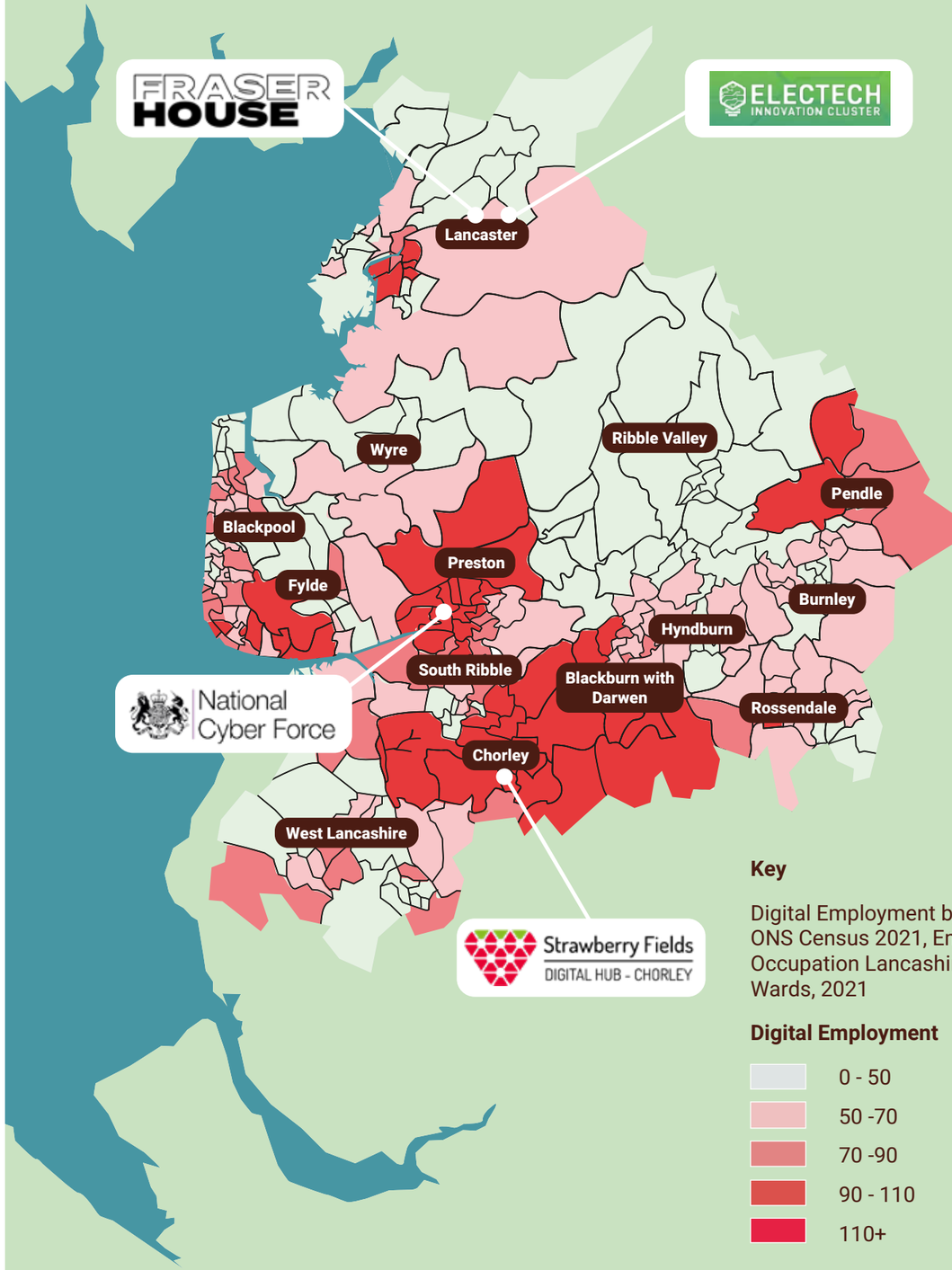
Blackburn Cyber Skills and Education Campus and Innovation Quarter

Part of a £250 million investment in Blackburn Town Centre, this development includes a high-quality office and teaching facility and a new cyber business centre. Positioned near the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, it strengthens Blackburn's role in the North West Cyber Corridor, connecting with major business clusters and health innovation hubs.

Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and Silicon Sands

This zone drives economic regeneration and innovation on the Fylde Coast, supporting aviation, energy, digital, and advanced manufacturing sectors. Silicon Sands is pioneering the concept of net-zero, sustainable data centres (powered by major offshore wind farms and solar power), leveraging immersion cooling technology and waste heat recovery with the potential to provide 1GW of Data Centre capacity with access to 3.4GW of Green Power, creating £14.3bn of GVA , 14,000 jobs and reducing fuel poverty, creating a coastal innovation district focused on digital industries and clean growth, enhancing business space, skills programmes, and R&D activity with the potential to emerge as a leading AI Growth Zone.

Digital Employment Distribution



Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence

Sector Priority Four

Lancashire's advanced engineering and manufacturing (AEM) sector is a cornerstone of the county's economy. It demonstrates resilience, innovation, and global competitiveness, playing a critical role in driving productivity, exports, and sustainable growth. The sector also supports regional wellbeing and provides high-value employment across the county.

Employment levels in AEM have remained stable and are growing in parts of Lancashire, with productivity and output rebounding strongly post-COVID. East Lancashire, in particular, is a hub for advanced engineering and manufacturing, with major employers such as Safran in Burnley and Rolls-Royce in Barnoldswick anchoring a dense network of supply chain businesses.

Key industries include defence and civil aerospace, energy, chemicals, and commercial vehicles. Beneath these prime contractors is a robust ecosystem of mid-cap companies that have demonstrated adaptability, innovation, and a readiness to diversify into emerging low-carbon markets.

Sectoral Strengths and Specialisms

Electech Innovation Cluster

Established in 2020, the Electech Innovation Cluster includes over 50 members across North Lancashire and South Cumbria. The cluster supports growth in the electronics sector through collaboration, innovation, and engagement with universities via Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. Since its inception, the cluster has grown by 68%, with a combined turnover of £161 million and over 900 employees[xvi].

Energy and Low Carbon Technologies

Lancashire's AEM base is supported by the RedCAT network and is increasingly aligned with the energy transition, positioning the region as a national leader in clean growth. Between 2030 and 2050, Lancashire is forecast to have the highest number of energy and low carbon jobs per capita in England.

Lancaster University is investing £57 million in campus decarbonisation, including a solar PV farm and a new Low Carbon Energy Centre. Its Centre for Global Eco-Innovation has supported over 700 SMEs between 2012 and 2023, delivering measurable environmental and economic benefits.A

Edge Hill University's SustainNET initiative supports grassroots organisations through skills development and behaviour change programmes, critical to the success of local net zero and sustainability efforts.A

AMRC North West has worked with nearly 600 Lancashire manufacturing SMEs since 2019, helping them adopt new technologies, improve processes, and reduce emissions. Its Additive Manufacturing Forum, launched in 2025, is building a local supply chain to retain high-value production, such as defence components, within the county.

Image: Leyland Trucks

Lancashire's advanced engineering and manufacturing sector is a cornerstone of the UK's industrial future, combining global competitiveness with low-carbon innovation.

Sector Priority Four
Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence

The University of Lancashire's Engineering Innovation Centre (EIC) in Preston is a £30 million plus hub for advanced engineering and low carbon innovation. Through applied research, industry collaboration, and workforce development, the EIC plays an important role in accelerating Lancashire's transition to a low carbon economy.

Health Innovation

There is growing synergy between AEM, digital, cyber, and health innovation. Opportunities in MedTech, robotics, and AI are emerging, with potential for cross-sector knowledge transfer from nuclear and defence into health applications.

Key Locations and Infrastructure

Lancashire's AEM Corridor includes some of the UK's most significant industrial sites:A

- **BAE Systems at Warton and Samlesbury** – supporting key defence programmes such as Eurofighter Typhoon and F-35 Lightning II aircraft.
- **Safran Nacelles, Burnley** – supporting civil aircraft engine programmes with carbon fibre reinforced composite systems.
- **Rolls-Royce, Barnoldswick** – supporting civil and military aircraft engine programmes with metallic engine systems and components.
- **AGC Chemicals Europe and Victrex, Hillhouse Enterprise Zone** – producing advanced materials for aerospace, defence, and EVs.

These assets form one of the world's largest aerospace and defence clusters, with Lancashire having the highest density of aerospace and defence employment in the UK, accounting for 1 in every 45 jobs[xvii].

Additional key sites include:

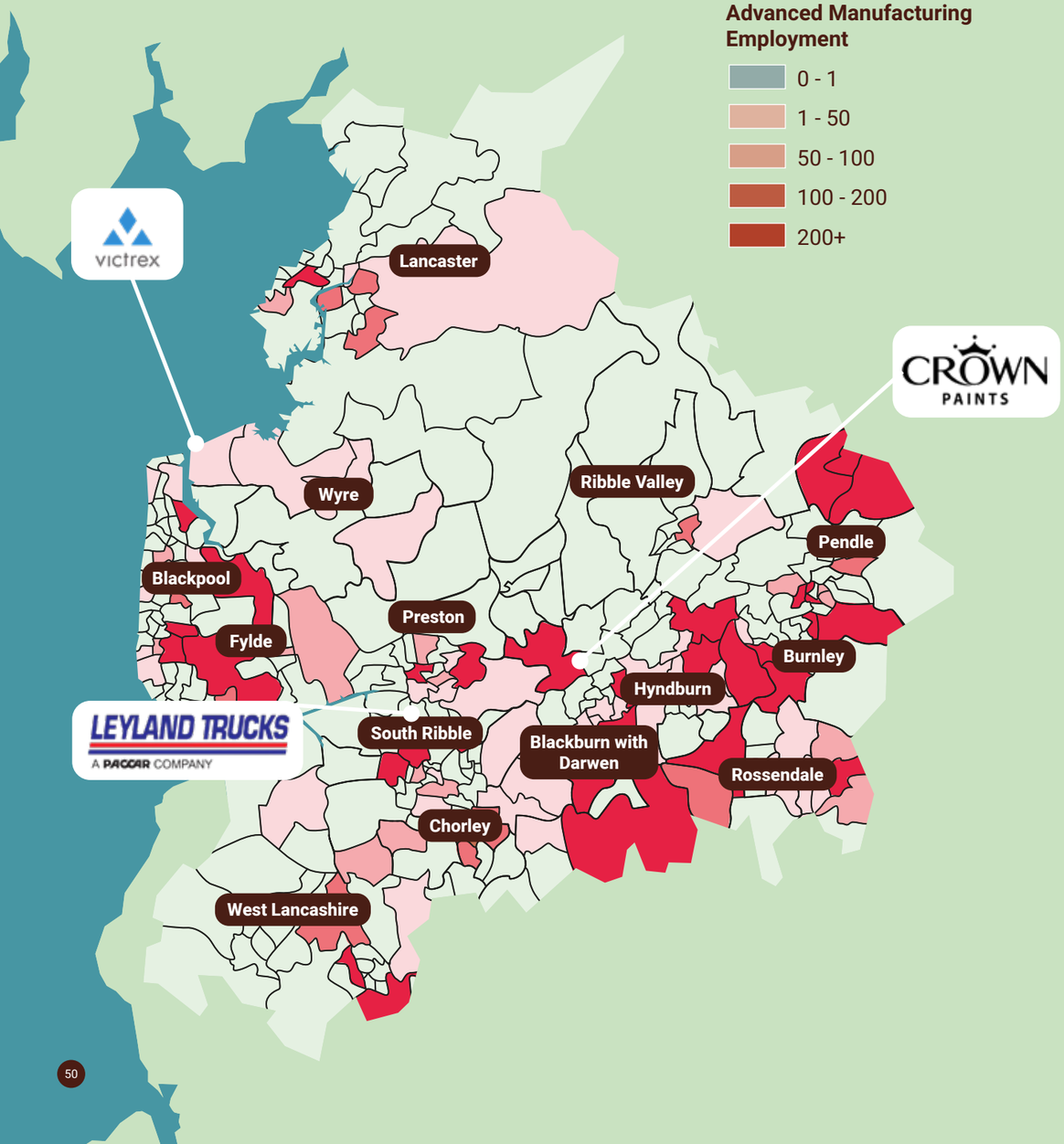
- **Hillhouse Enterprise Zone, Lancaster** – with potential for hydrogen production, waste-to-energy, and nuclear-related manufacturing.
- **Westinghouse, Springfields, Fylde** – a global leader in nuclear fuel manufacturing.
- **Emerson & Renwick, Accrington** - a world-leading equipment engineering company.
- **Graham Engineering, Nelson** – specialising in high-integrity components for nuclear, aerospace, and defence.
- **Perspex, Darwen** – a leading acrylic sheet manufacturer.

Lancashire is home to one of the UK's largest aerospace and defence clusters anchored by BAE Systems operations at Samlesbury and Warton.

BAE Systems Warton

Sector Priority Four
Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence

Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing



Key

Advanced Manufacturing Employment by Ward Source: Business Register and Employment Survey Lancashire Electoral Wards, 2023

Advanced Manufacturing Employment

- 0 - 1
- 1 - 50
- 50 - 100
- 100 - 200
- 200+

Strategic Role and Economic Importance

A team of industry and academic specialists working on the Lancashire Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Watchtower Programme, supported by Lancashire County Council, have identified numerous new growth opportunities for Lancashire manufacturers over the next decade. These include:

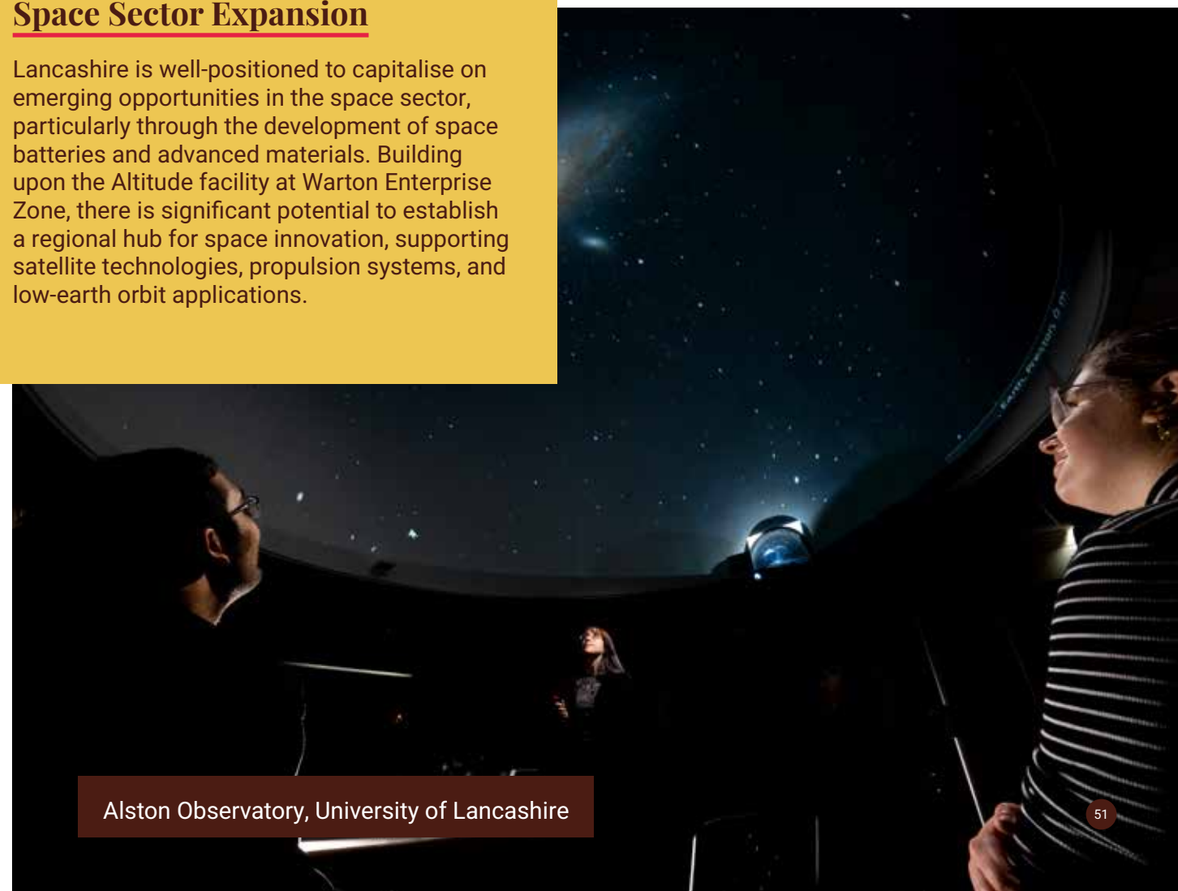
- The Global Combat Air Programme (in collaboration with Italy and Japan)
- The AUKUS Submarine Programme (in collaboration with the United States and Australia)
- Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMRs)
- Zero Emission Heavy Goods Vehicles (electric and hydrogen powered)
- Gigafactories
- Space Technologies

These initiatives could provide high-value employment for tens of thousands of people in Lancashire by 2035, contingent on improvements in the skills, productivity, and competitiveness of local supply chains.

These growth opportunities complement the traditional aerospace and automotive manufacturing sectors in Lancashire, which also have significant growth forecasts. For instance, the aerospace industry delivered 1,128 new aircraft in 2024 and received 1,447 new orders. As of early 2025, there were 15,818 aircraft on backlog order—equivalent to thirteen years' worth of work at current manufacturing rates[xviii].

Space Sector Expansion

Lancashire is well-positioned to capitalise on emerging opportunities in the space sector, particularly through the development of space batteries and advanced materials. Building upon the Altitude facility at Warton Enterprise Zone, there is significant potential to establish a regional hub for space innovation, supporting satellite technologies, propulsion systems, and low-earth orbit applications.



Alston Observatory, University of Lancashire

Sector Priority Four
Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence

Case Study: Victrex

Victrex develops high-performance polymer solutions used in electronics, automotive, aerospace, and energy industries. Their materials are found in over 20,000 aircraft, 500+ million automotive applications, and 100+ million industrial machines. The company has invested £90 million in a third production plant in Lancashire and is a cornerstone employer in the Lancashire Careers Hub, inspiring and engaging young people in local schools and colleges.

Growth Plan Project supporting the AEM sector

Joining up Innovation Assets

Lancashire aims to maximise the impact of recent capital investments by developing complementary revenue-based initiatives. We will define a common set of revenue support activities and programmes that run alongside the capital investments. These will scale the economic potential of key innovation assets, such as AMRC North West and the University of Central Lancashire's Engineering Innovation Centre (EIC). These propositions are designed to attract further public and private investment, support high-value job creation, and ensure long-term, inclusive economic benefits.A

Emerging opportunities in space, zero-emission vehicles, and modular nuclear reactors could create tens of thousands of high-value jobs in Lancashire by 2025.

Image: Breathing Colour, 2024 - Margo Selby + Standfast & Barracks An Art in Manufacturing Co-Commission between National Festival of Making and British Textile Biennial, Photography - Jack Bolton

Culture and Tourism as Economic Catalysts

Sector Priority Five

Sector Priority Five
Culture and Tourism as Economic Catalysts

Lancashire's geography, spanning coast, countryside, cities, and towns, offers a distinctive quality of place that sets it apart from more urbanised city regions such as Greater Manchester and Liverpool. This diversity underpins a compelling lifestyle and visitor proposition, blending natural beauty with cultural vibrancy and heritage. Culture and tourism are central to Lancashire's identity and economic growth. They drive the Creative Industries, attract inward investment and talent, and support a thriving visitor economy that generates billions in revenue and thousands of jobs.

The latest figures from Visit Lancashire show that in 2023 Lancashire welcomed 67 million visitors, generating £5.4 billion in economic impact, a clear demonstration of the sector's strength and importance to the county's prosperity.

Over the next decade, planned investment in cultural, heritage, and visitor assets will enhance quality of life, boost wellbeing, and strengthen Lancashire's appeal as a place to live, work, and visit. Two new strategies, a refreshed (Re)made Cultural Strategy and a new Tourism Strategy, will reinforce Lancashire's position as a year-round, high-value cultural destination. Together, they will unlock strategic investment, harness digital and AI opportunities, and grow a tourism sector powered by a strong cultural offering.A

Lancashire had 67 million visits in 2023.

Sectoral Strengths and Specialisms

Lancashire's coast, countryside, cities, and towns will be promoted as a diverse, high-value destination. This will be built on cultural assets such as natural beauty, heritage, food, and the creativity of local enterprises. These strengths will be supported by improved connectivity, skills development, and stronger partnerships with national bodies including the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Visit England, and Arts Council England.

The county's approach reflects Visit Lancashire's SMART tourism principles, which focus on sustainability, mutual benefit, accessibility, innovation, and the use of digital tools to guide development. The Lancashire coast, in particular, is fundamental to the economic revival of the tourism sector. Blackpool leads the UK in domestic family tourism, with 21 million visits in 2023 and a £1.5 billion visitor economy[xix]. Major projects such as the £300 million Blackpool Central development and the extension of the famous Illuminations are part of a wider £2 billion Growth and Prosperity programme.

Towns like Lytham St Annes, Fleetwood, and Morecambe each offer unique cultural and natural experiences, supported by bold regeneration strategies. Morecambe Bay's creative resurgence includes the £100 million Eden Project Morecambe and the Morecambe Bay Triennial, a new coastal festival of community-led commissions. These initiatives blend accessibility, innovation, and cultural excellence, while the Morecambe Bay Curriculum is inspiring and engaging young people in sustainability and future opportunities.

Innovation and Research

Lancashire's Growth Plan is underpinned by a range of high-impact specialisms with strong cultural dimensions. These include tourism and hospitality, green skills and sustainability, cultural and heritage regeneration, and food-led and digital-first visitor experiences. These areas are increasingly supported by research and innovation in digital infrastructure, technologies, and creative entrepreneurship.

Lancashire's investment in cyber, digital, and AI is also benefiting the Creative Industries. Inclusive skills pipelines, tech-enabled infrastructure, and cross-sector innovation are helping to build new creative clusters and digital production hubs. The Lancaster–Samlesbury–Manchester corridor, Blackburn Cyber Campus, and Silicon Sands in Blackpool are key locations supporting artistic innovation and talent retention.

Strategic Opportunities and Future Growth

Lancashire's growing reputation as a hub for nationally and internationally significant festivals will be a major driver of growth over the next decade. This momentum builds on the success of events such as Blackpool's Lightpool Festival and the International Dance Festivals. Preston Guild 2032 is expected to generate over £20 million in direct investment, while Encounter Festival is enhancing local production capacity.

The Morecambe Bay Triennial, launching in 2027, will continue the coast's creative revival through inclusive, high-quality commissions. Events like the National Festival of Making in Blackburn, the British Textile Biennial, and Burnley's Year of Culture 2027 are helping to connect Lancashire's industrial heritage with its creative future. These initiatives are also supported by the Light Up the North festival network, which fosters innovation and artistic development across towns including Blackpool, Lancaster, and Accrington.

Key Locations and Infrastructure

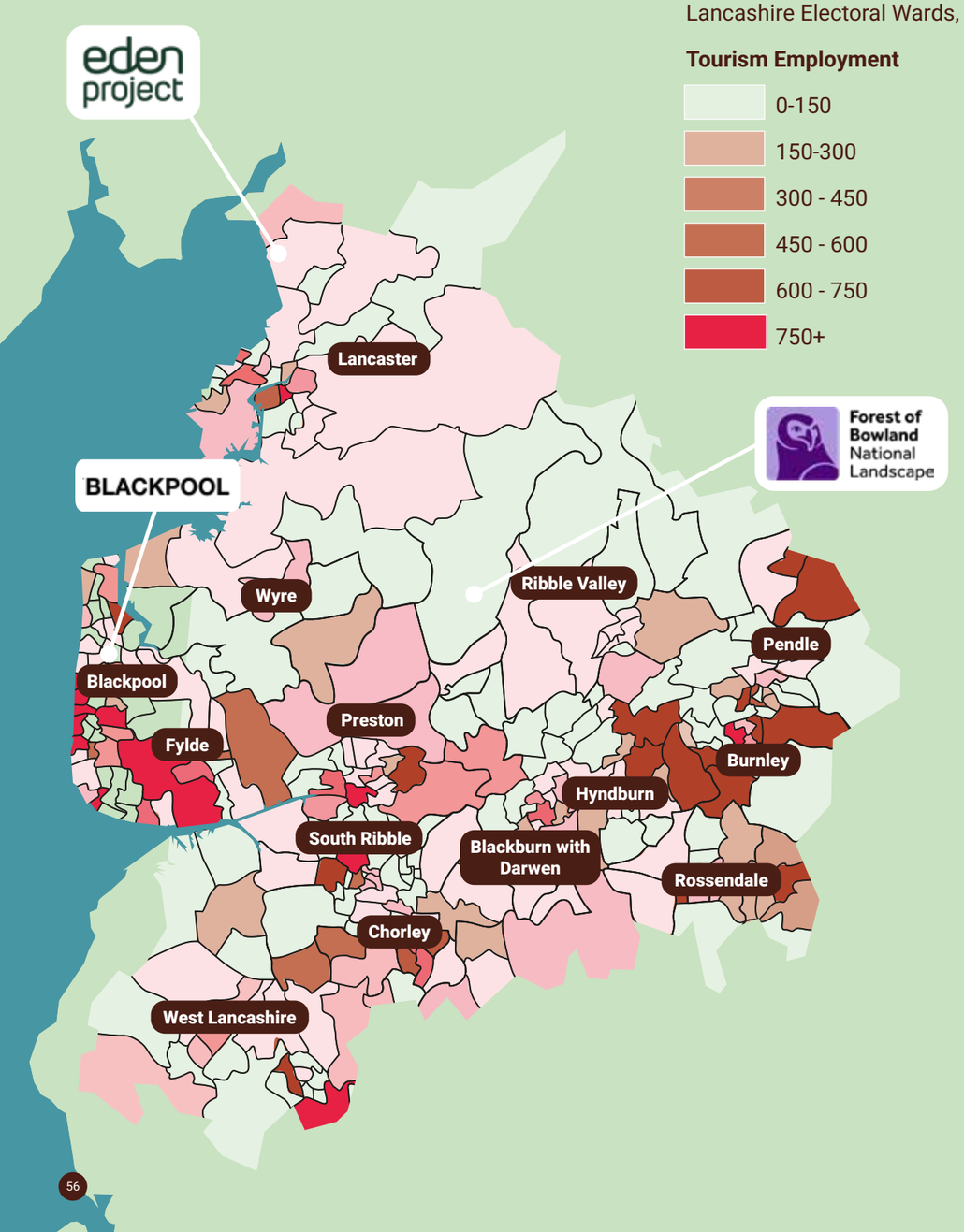
Culture is central to Lancashire's growth and renewal, particularly across its main growth areas. The county is home to a wide range of cultural infrastructure, including Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations, Creative People and Places projects, a Regional Music Hub, 64 libraries, and nationally significant museums. A growing network of creative hubs connects communities to opportunities in the Creative Industries.

Local councils, supported by government investment, are delivering cultural and heritage programmes that improve wellbeing and drive regeneration. One standout example is Super Slow Way's Linear Park, a transformative green/blue corridor along the Leeds–Liverpool Canal. This project connects communities through creativity, wellbeing, and the repurposing of industrial heritage, stretching from Northlight in Brierfield to Imperial Mill in Blackburn.A

Another major development is ANIMATE, a £45 million cinema and leisure complex in Preston's Harris Quarter. This project is revitalising the city centre and supporting the council's broader regeneration strategy. Strategic initiatives are also emerging across the county, including the Blackburn Screen Industries Strategy, a creative writing hub in Accrington, and the transformation of The Harris in Preston into a modern cultural anchor. Universities in Lancaster, Edge Hill, and the University of Lancashire are leading on cultural research, entrepreneurship, and digital skills development.

Sector Priority Five
Culture and Tourism as Economic Catalysts

Tourism Employment Distribution



Key

Tourism Employment by Ward Source: Business Register and Employment Survey Lancashire Electoral Wards, 2023

Tourism Employment

- 0-150
- 150-300
- 300 - 450
- 450 - 600
- 600 - 750
- 750+

Case Study: Blackpool: Driving Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Growth in Lancashire

Blackpool, with a nationally recognised brand and core audience of value-seeking domestic families, is well-placed for government investment in skills and people to drive inclusive, sustainable growth for Lancashire and serve as a flagship partner for Government and a model for cultural regeneration. The town is focused on broadening its appeal to build upon its strong brand and diverse business base to broaden its appeal and enhance the visitor experience through investments in quality accommodation, cultural programming, and year-round free events.

Its assets, including historic landmarks and venues like the Winter Gardens, Grand Theatre and new Showtown museum, position the town as a cultural gateway to Lancashire for high-value cultural breaks. Innovation in digital marketing, virtual reality and sustainable infrastructure keeps Blackpool ahead of tourism trends.

Signature events like the Winter Gardens dance festival attract international visitors, extend stays, boost local spending and are a clear source of growth strengthening Blackpool's position as a leader in cultural and coastal tourism. The dynamic visitor economy supports residents by providing employment opportunities, particularly for young people and underserved communities. As visitor numbers grow, so do job opportunities, enhancing local resilience and community pride.

Sector Priority Five
Culture and Tourism as Economic Catalysts

Growth Plan Projects Supporting Culture and Tourism

Lancashire's cultural and tourism strategies are underpinned by a growing portfolio of transformational projects designed to scale up the county's cultural assets, attract new investment, and deliver inclusive growth. These initiatives aim to develop new creative clusters, expand digital infrastructure, and embed culture more deeply into Lancashire's broader economic and social strategies.

A Lancashire Cultural Prospectus is being developed as part of Re(made) to align these efforts with the county's wider growth ambitions. Blackpool, recognised as an Arts Council England Priority Place, is leading the way in domestic tourism and is developing a compelling coastal cultural offer, supported by the Eden Project Morecambe. Nearby destinations such as Lytham St Annes and Fleetwood offer coastal charm and heritage, while urban centres like Blackburn, Lancaster, and Preston provide strong civic leadership and cultural infrastructure.

Across this diverse landscape, culture is shaping strategic priorities—from economic growth to wellbeing and environmental sustainability. The programme of activity will contribute to a shared vision for Lancashire and provide a framework to assess the potential of new or emerging propositions that align with the county's growth objectives.

Transformational Projects

Blackpool Central Leisure Development

This project aims to transform a prime seafront site into a world-class, year-round visitor destination.

Morecambe Seafront and Eden EffectA

The Eden Project Morecambe will reimagine the seafront as a 21st-century eco-tourism destination, driving regional regeneration, job creation, and visitor growth across north Lancashire.

Key Actions to Support Culture and Tourism

To fully realise the potential of culture as a driver of inclusive and sustainable growth, Lancashire is focusing on a series of strategic actions. These include exploring the development of an iconic cultural symbol project that can serve as a flagship for the region's creative identity. The county is also prioritising the strategic development of Lancashire as a year-round, high-value tourist destination, built on its cultural assets and the ability to connect heritage with contemporary experiences.

Support for cultural infrastructure is central to this approach. This includes scaling up existing assets, attracting new investment, and ensuring that culture contributes to place shaping, health and wellbeing, and the delivery of the wider Growth Plan. Artists and creative enterprises will be supported through pathways into employment and the development of sustainable, resilient organisations that reflect the diversity of Lancashire's communities.

Cross-sector innovation will be encouraged, particularly where culture intersects with health, gaming, immersive technologies, and other digital applications. These collaborations will help nurture a tech-enabled creative ecosystem that spans both public and private sectors.

The emerging Cultural Prospectus of key cultural and heritage assets will unlock their potential in delivering wider growth priorities, including placemaking, community development, skills, and job creation. This will be supported by Lancashire Re(made), a refreshed cultural and creative industries strategy focused on quality of life, health and wellbeing, tourism, inward investment, and careers in the creative economy.

Section Three

The Case for Growth

Section Three
The Case for Growth

A Clear Evidence Base to Underpin the Growth Plan

Our Plan is grounded in a robust and wide-ranging evidence base, including the Lancashire Independent Economic Review (2022)[xx], the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Plan (2023)[xxi] , the Lancashire Combined County Authority Proposal (2024)[xxii], and the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework (2024)[xxiii].

Lancashire is a region of national significance, with a working-age population approaching one million. However, it faces challenges related to an ageing population and rising economic inactivity, resulting in one of the lowest workforce-to-resident ratios in the country[xxiv]. Despite this, adjusted job density figures indicate that there are sufficient jobs[xxv] to support the active workforce, performing well compared to other areas in the North West outside the regional core. The evolving Get Lancashire Working Plan aligns with the Growth Plan and aims to drive up employment rates, with residents benefiting from economic success.

While Lancashire's economic mass is considerable, its relative position has remained broadly unchanged over the past two decades. Economic output is concentrated along key transport corridors, particularly those aligned with motorway and rail infrastructure, while rural areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty contribute less to overall output.

Lancashire Cyber Education Week

Lancashire's Opportunities

Based on the evidence base, we have identified the following key opportunities:

1. **Scale and significanceA**
   Lancashire is a major economic area with a population of nearly one million working-age residents and an economy valued at £40 billion.

2. **Advanced engineering and manufacturing (AEM)A**
   The AEM sector contributes over £7 billion annually to the local economy and has employment levels well above the national average[xxvi].

3. **High-productivity clusters and innovation assets**
   The county is home to four universities, three university teaching hospitals, and a growing number of high-tech spin-outs, and strong research capabilities that support technology retention and skills development[xxvii].

4. **Job density and employment structure**
   Lancashire has a sufficient number of jobs to support its workforce. The focus is on creating more high-value roles while recognising the importance of quality employment across all wage levels.

5. **Concentrated economic performance**
   Economic output is increasingly concentrated in well-connected areas, with opportunities for further agglomeration, highlighting the importance of infrastructure in driving productivity.

Lancashire's Challenges

The evidence base also highlights the following challenges:

1. **Sustaining growth momentum**
   Lancashire must maintain and build on recent improvements in growth rates, which have historically lagged behind Mayoral Combined Authorities.

With the scale, talent and innovation to match its national significance, Lancashire is ready to unlock its full economic potential.

2. **Sectoral imbalance**
   The economy is heavily reliant on AEM, with a relatively low share of output from knowledge-based sectors. There is a need to upskill the workforce and raise awareness of emerging opportunities.

3. **Connectivity gaps**
   While north-south transport links are strong, east-west connectivity remains poor, limiting labour market mobility and economic integration across the county[xxviii].

4. **Investment constraints**
   Public and private investment levels have remained stagnant or declined in real terms, limiting Lancashire's ability to scale innovation and infrastructure[xxix].

5. **Workforce pressures**
   High volumes and rates of economic inactivity and an ageing population are placing pressure on businesses and public services, reducing productivity potential.

Section Three
The Case for Growth

Productivity and Innovation

The evidence base reveals that Lancashire's overall productivity is below the national average, though some areas, particularly those with strong AEM activity, outperform national benchmarks. Research shows a strong correlation between productivity and the proportion of residents with Level 4 and above qualifications[xxx] which explains a significant share of local variation[xxxi].

The business base is one of the largest of any Combined Authority area in the UK [xxxii], but many medium-sized firms are not scaling into larger employers[xxxiii]. While AEM remains the largest economic contributor, Lancashire has the second-lowest concentration of output from Knowledge Intensive Business Services (KIBS) among Combined Authorities[xxxiv].

Looking ahead, forecasts suggest a gradual decline in manufacturing employment, offset by increased output and specialisation in advanced manufacturing. Growth is also expected in digital, professional services, healthcare, and education[xxxv].

Investment and Connectivity

The evidence base highlights that commuting patterns show a strong north-south orientation, with limited east-west movement due to weaker transport links[xxxvi]. Many residents commute to neighbouring regions such as Cumbria, Greater Manchester, and Liverpool[xxxvii].

Since 1998, Lancashire has experienced the lowest growth in investment spending of any UK region. This may explain its relatively modest economic growth over the same period[xxxviii]. In terms of innovation, Lancashire ranks in the lower half of UK regions for Innovate UK grant awards[xxxix] and in the bottom quarter for average grant size. These grants are increasingly concentrated in areas with strong KIBS sectors, rather than production-oriented economies like Lancashire.

This section underscores Lancashire's vital role in the national economy, backed by a robust evidence base. The region's strengths and opportunities in advanced engineering, manufacturing, and high-productivity clusters are balanced by challenges such as connectivity gaps. Addressing these will enhance productivity and sustain growth, positioning Lancashire to drive innovation and contribute significantly to the UK's economic goals.

Lancashire's Economic Landscape

Opportunities	Challenges
Scale and SignificanceA	Growth Momentum
Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing	Sectoral Imbalance
Innovation Assets	Connectivity Gaps
Job Density	Investment Constraints
Economic Concentration	Workforce Pressures

Section Four
Spatial Priorities

Section Four
Spatial Priorities

Key Clusters and Corridors to Enhance Economic Connectivity and Collaboration

Lancashire's spatial focus is on unlocking the potential of its interconnected economic geography. At the heart of this emerging strategy is the Central Belt, which runs along the M55–M65 corridor and is anchored by Blackpool, Preston, Blackburn, and Burnley. This corridor contains the majority of Lancashire's major employment zones, population centres, and innovation assets. It also serves as a vital west–east route for the movement of goods and people, with Preston acting as a key north–south transport hub.

The Central Belt is further strengthened by the emerging North–South Cyber Corridor, which links Lancaster, Samlesbury, and Manchester. This corridor supports high-growth, high-tech businesses, including university spin-outs and digital entrepreneurs in North Lancashire, helping to foster innovation across both corridors.

The Growth Plan aims to develop the Central Belt into a cohesive economic zone by leveraging existing strengths, future opportunities, workforce concentrations, and strategic transport routes. This will create a super corridor of innovation assets, further and higher education institutions, economic clusters, and development-ready sites for private investment.

Lancaster plays a complementary role in this geography. Positioned at the gateway to Cumbria, it is home to clusters in digital, renewable energy, health innovation, and university spin-outs. Its strategic location along the M6 and West Coast Mainline connects it to the Central Belt and supports wider initiatives such as the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and the National Cyber Security programme contributing to the development of the emerging Lancaster-Samlesbury-Manchester cyber/digital corridor.

Lancashire's Central Belt is evolving into a super corridor of innovation, connectivity and inclusive growth, linking people, places and potential across the county.

Lancashire's economic geography is increasingly integrated with neighbouring regions including Cumbria, North and West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, and Merseyside[xl]. Areas such as Lancaster, Rossendale, and West Lancashire have particularly strong external economic links. The Growth Plan recognises these relationships and seeks to build on them through collaborative projects and shared ambitions.

Lancashire's economy is polycentric, with multiple interconnected towns and cities rather than a single dominant urban centre. This structure is illustrated in maps on pages 66-70, which show the proximity of clusters, transport routes, settlements, universities, major projects, and cross-boundary economic connections.

However, fragmented connectivity, particularly poor east–west public transport, limits the potential for agglomeration. This restricts collaboration, innovation, and labour market mobility across the Central Belt. Addressing these gaps is a key priority in the LCCA's forthcoming Local Transport Plan.

The Central Belt includes several major economic clusters, such as the Enterprise Zones at Blackpool Airport, Hillhouse, and Warton (on the Fylde Coast), and Samlesbury (between Preston and Blackburn), along with Springfields site (west of Preston) and the Blackburn Growth Axis. Our Plan also includes substantial urban growth and regeneration opportunities in Blackpool (including Blackpool Central and projects in the Blackpool Town Prospectus), Preston (including Station Quarter), Blackburn (including Blackburn Cyber and Skills Campus), and Burnley (including the Town Centre Masterplan). Lancaster offers a complementary proposition, including Heysham Gateway, Eden North, the city centre, and the Health Innovation Hub centred around Lancaster University. Our transport priorities will ensure effective connections to meet the needs of existing businesses and unlock the full growth potential of these areas.

Many of Lancashire's economic opportunities are located within or near areas of high deprivation. The Growth Plan commits to smart, integrated investment strategies that promote inclusive and sustainable growth. This includes improving connectivity between communities and employment opportunities, addressing transport-related social exclusion, and creating new pathways to education, training, and high-quality work. Promoting walking and cycling for local journeys and improving access to public transport will also help improve health and economic participation.

Lancashire's rural areas are also a major asset. They include National Landscapes, as part of a National Park, conservation sites, market towns, and diverse housing markets that help attract global talent and retain ambitious residents. However, limited public transport leads to car dependency, long journey times, and congestion. The Growth Plan will explore innovative transport solutions to improve rural connectivity and support modal shift into the Central Belt.

Finally, the Plan recognises historical and cultural barriers to agglomeration across Lancashire. Poor connectivity between towns, short travel horizons, and limited visibility of opportunities contribute to fragmentation. By promoting a stronger economic identity and fostering collaboration across "Team Lancashire" partners, the Growth Plan aims to overcome these barriers and deliver inclusive, sustainable growth.

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Spatial Priorities

Lancashire's Emerging Growth Corridor Map

This map shows the main economic corridors and assets including the anchor strategic employment sites and Higher Education Institutions.

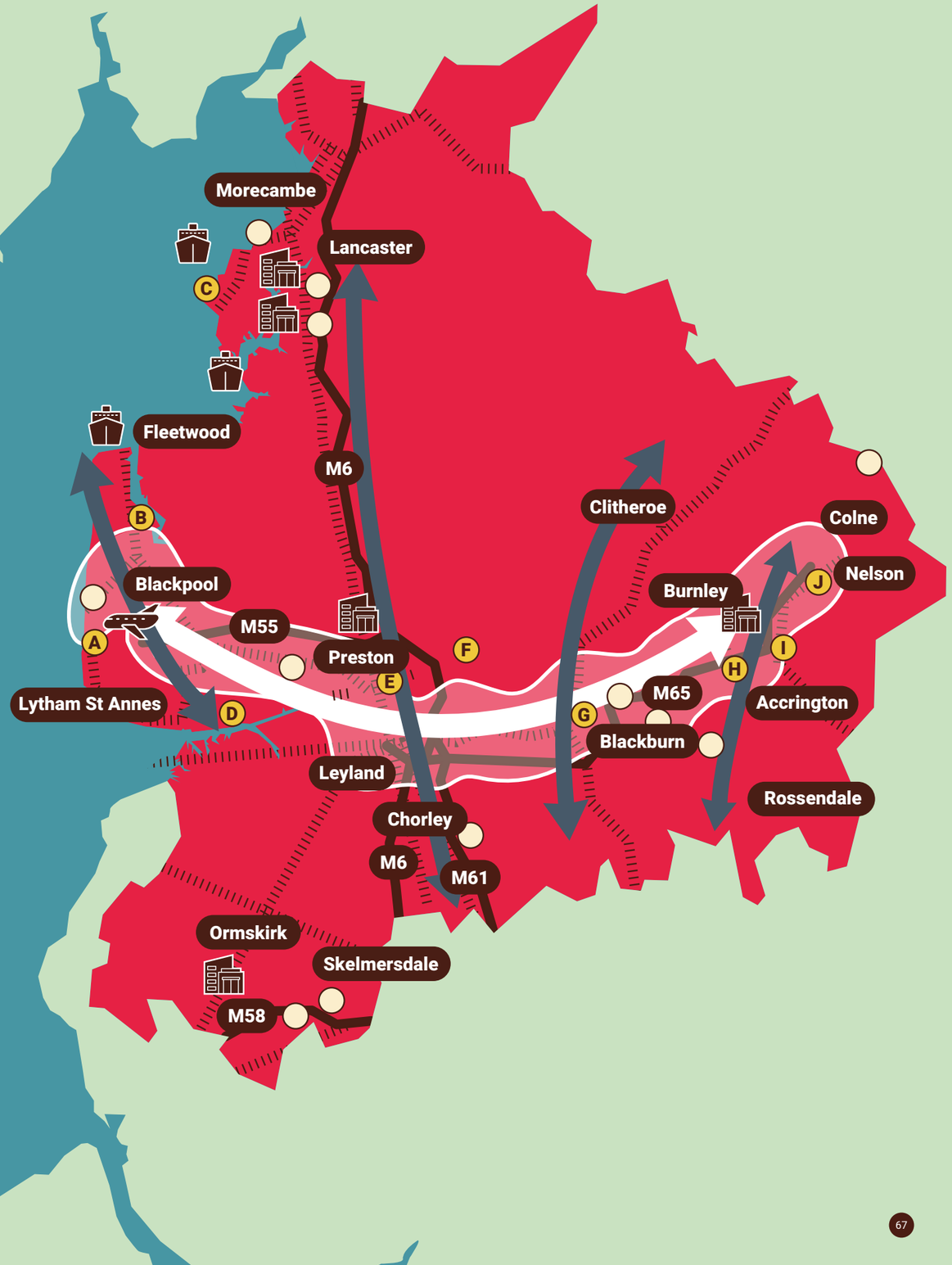
Note: This is a live and dynamic list of economic growth sites informed by a Lancashire Strategic Sites Report (Stantec, 2025). The sites demonstrate Lancashire's emerging economic corridors and will be developed further by the LCCA. The next steps for consideration by the LCCA include identifying where strategic housing sites and opportunities are emerging.

Key

- Motorway
- Rail line
- 50 % of Lancashire's population
- Complementary Strategic Sites – as listed in Appendix B
- Anchor Strategic Sites
- Main economic corridors
- Main University campus
- Ports
- Airport

Anchor Site

A Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone
B Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone Expansion
C Heysham Gateway
D Warton Enterprise Zone
E Preston Station Quarter
F Samlesbury Enterprise Zone
G Blackburn Growth Axis / Employment & Cyber Skills Campus
H Burnley Bridge and Burnley Bridge South
I Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan Employment Sites
J Lomeshaye Extension (Phase 2)



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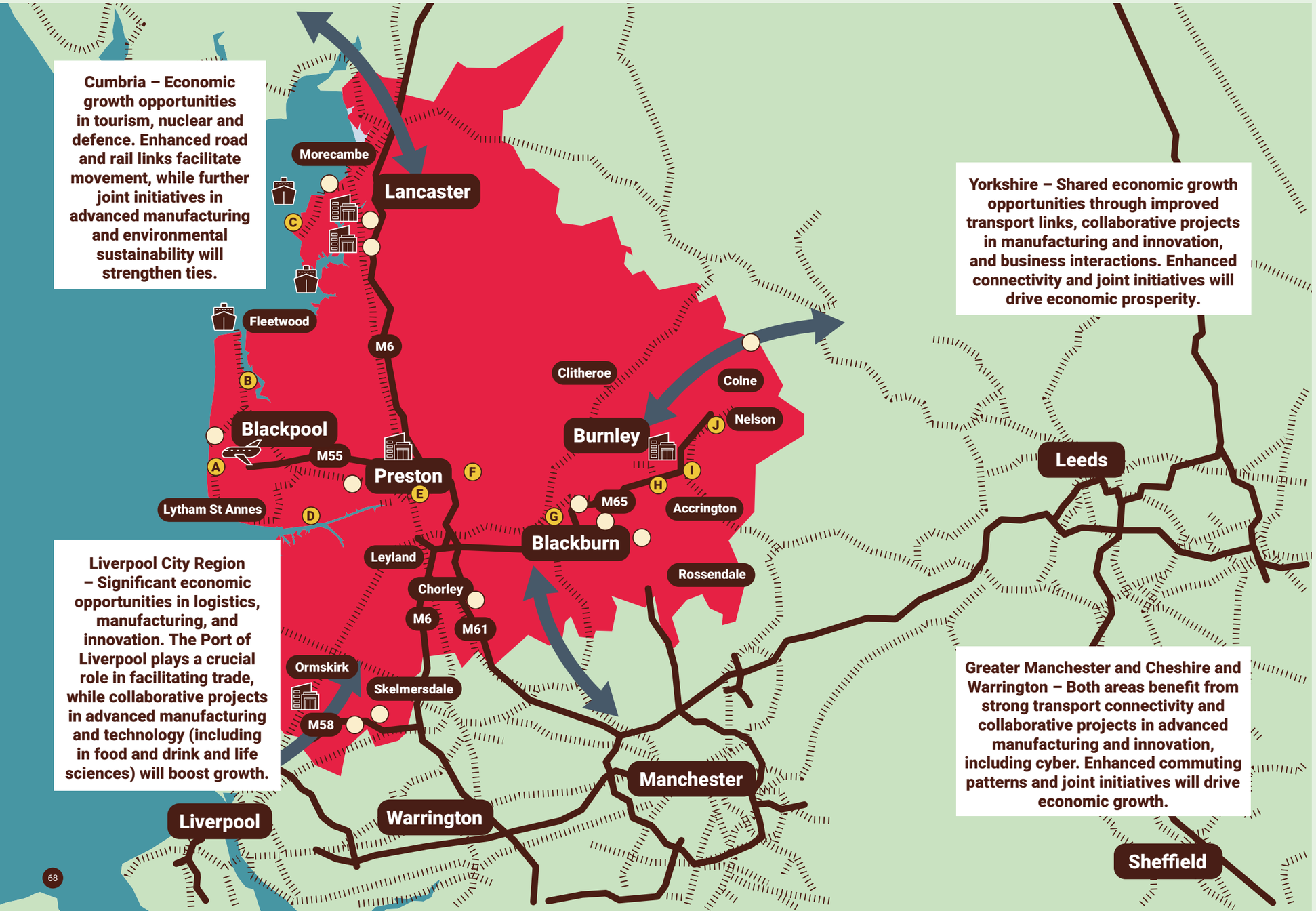
Lancashire's Economic Relationships with the Wider North



Key

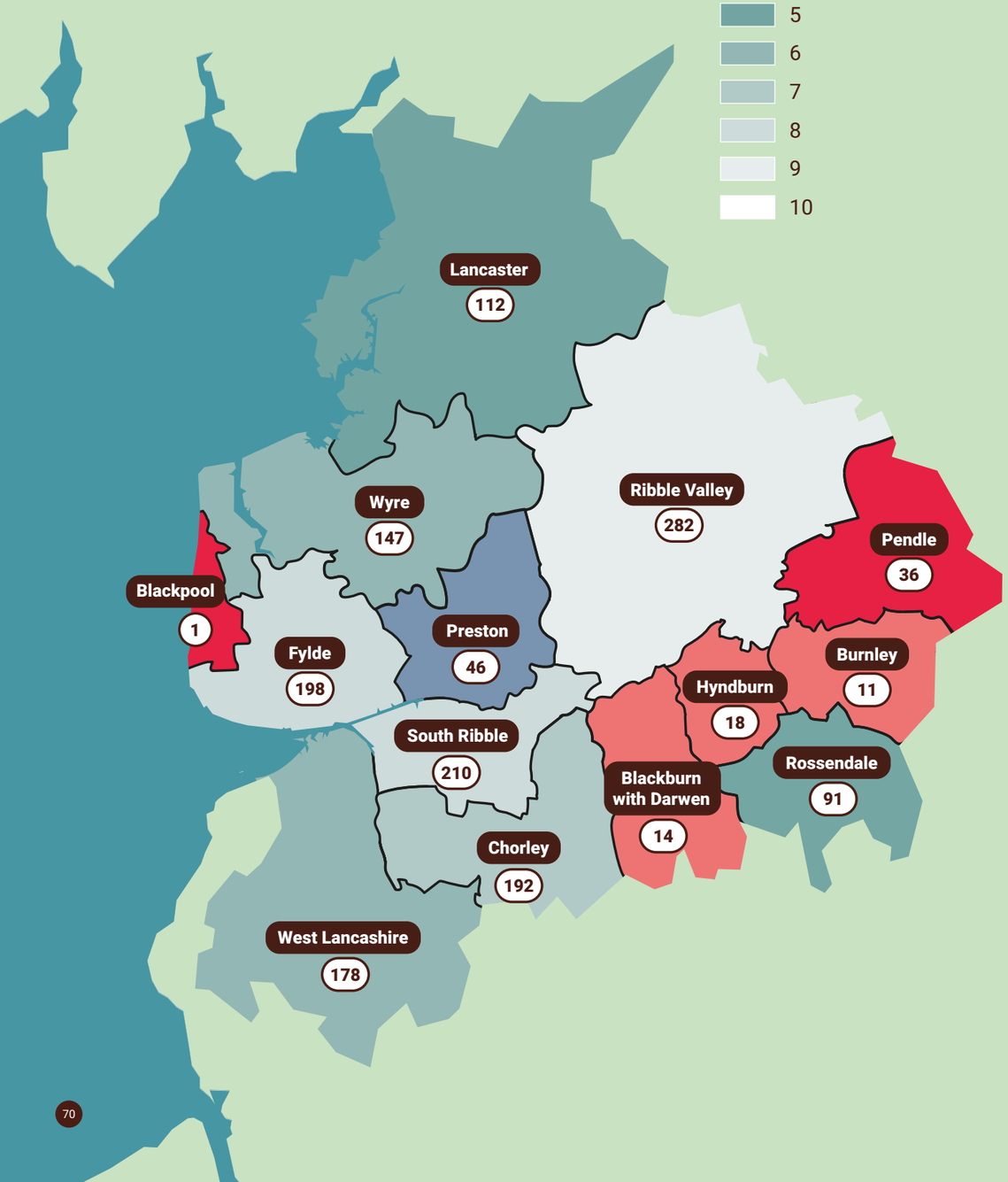
- Motorway
- Rail line
- Complementary Strategic Sites – as listed in Appendix B
- Anchor Strategic Sites
- Main economic corridors
- Main University campus
- Ports
- Airport

Anchor Site

- **A** Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone
- **B** Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone Expansion
- **C** Heysham Gateway
- **D** Warton Enterprise Zone
- **E** Preston Station Quarter
- **F** Samlesbury Enterprise Zone
- **G** Blackburn Growth Axis / Employment & Cyber Skills Campus
- **H** Burnley Bridge and Burnley Bridge South
- **I** Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan Employment Sites
- **J** Lomeshaye Extension (Phase 2)

Section Four
Spatial Priorities

Map Showing Areas of Economic Need Across Lancashire



Section Five

Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

New Lancashire Cricket Ground, South Ribble

Creating the Conditions for Inclusive Economic Growth

Lancashire is defined by its vibrant towns and cities, strong local identities, rich heritage, diverse communities, and outstanding natural landscapes. Place-based growth strategies and masterplans are beginning to deliver regionally significant outcomes. However, further action is needed to close performance gaps with the rest of the UK and ensure that growth is inclusive and sustainable.

This section outlines the infrastructure, skills, and social foundations needed to support inclusive growth across Lancashire.

Infrastructure and Place Transformation

A Future Lancashire Spatial Development Strategy

To develop a strategic framework for development and land use to underpin and accelerate economic growth and quality of place.

Lancashire's Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) will set out a long-term framework, with strategic policies to set out how land should be used and developed across Lancashire. Developed by the LCCA and aligned with the Local Transport Plan, the SDS will co-ordinate housing, infrastructure and economic growth enhancing quality of place across the county.

This approach is aligned with the English Devolution White Paper, which recognises Spatial Development Strategies as a key tool for devolved authorities to shape long-term, integrated, and locally led growth. The SDS is expected to be a statutory function of the LCCA, enabling Lancashire to plan strategically across local authority boundaries, coordinate investment, and deliver on national priorities such as net zero, housing, and economic resilience.

As a starting point the LCCA will work with Local Authorities and others on the development of evidence to inform the development of the emerging SDS.

Key Infrastructure Areas

Strategic, well-designed infrastructure is essential to creating competitive, connected, and sustainable places. Without it, business growth, housing delivery, and access to employment are constrained.

Transport and Connectivity

Lancashire partners are working collaboratively to develop a single, ambitious Local Transport Plan, overseen by the LCCA. This Plan is informed by a comprehensive evidence base that identifies key transport challenges and opportunities for delivering a competitive, connected, and zero-carbon Lancashire over the next two decades.

Evidence highlights the impact of poor transport connectivity, which creates barriers for businesses and limits residents' access to employment. Lancashire experiences high levels of transport-related social exclusion, contributing to poverty and poor health outcomes that prevent many economically inactive residents from entering the workforce.

East-West connectivity is a particular challenge, constraining labour market mobility, limiting innovation diffusion, and increasing business costs. Improving these connections, especially through enhanced rail, mass transit, and bus services, offers the potential to significantly boost productivity through better agglomeration.

Investment in pan-northern transport links will also support wider regional growth by improving connectivity to neighbouring regions, including Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, and North and West Yorkshire.

Section Five
Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Place-based transport investment will enhance quality of place, attract inward investment, and unlock new housing and employment opportunities. Integrated with regeneration programmes, transport improvements will strengthen civic pride and local identity, while enabling sustainable development in towns and strategic growth locations.

By encouraging walking, cycling, and public transport use, Lancashire can improve public health, increase access to local jobs and services, and create the capacity for new homes and employment across the county.

The new Local Transport Plan will guide the development of a 20-year transport investment strategy. This will include a range of major projects, as outlined in Section 7, and will be rigorously tested to ensure alignment with Lancashire's economic priorities, including productivity growth, regeneration, and inward investment.

Energy Infrastructure

Lancashire is well-positioned to play a leading role in the UK's transition to secure, clean energy. The county benefits from a strong combination of natural assets, a skilled workforce, and a growing base of energy-related businesses. The LCCA will take a proactive role in shaping the region's energy future, working with key partners to align Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs) with local priorities and opportunities.

This approach will ensure Lancashire receives the energy infrastructure required to power economic growth and support the deployment of more locally distributed energy systems. These systems will empower communities to generate and manage their own energy, contributing to energy resilience and sustainability. Lancashire is already home to several nationally significant energy supply and demand projects, further enhancing its strategic importance within the UK energy sector.

Housing

The LCCA is exploring opportunities to accelerate housing growth by learning from successful strategies in other combined authority areas. This will guide future engagement with Government on planning, funding, and the devolution of powers to support delivery.

Working closely with local planning authorities and partners such as Homes England, the LCCA aims to develop integrated housing and economic strategies that support inclusive growth, workforce retention, and regeneration. High-quality, well-located housing is essential to improving wellbeing, reducing economic inactivity, and enabling long-term participation in the labour market.

Aligning housing delivery with Lancashire's strengths in clean energy, defence, and cyber will help attract investment and talent. These sectors are already drawing significant interest and require a modern, diverse housing offer to support a skilled workforce.

Despite national challenges, several areas in Lancashire are demonstrating strong leadership through robust Local Plans and pro-growth strategies. With the right powers and infrastructure investment, the region can accelerate the delivery of high-quality homes in the right places to meet future demand and unlock economic potential.

Housing Growth Case Study: The North East Blackburn Strategic Housing Site

The North East Blackburn Strategic Housing Site is the key housing growth opportunity within the Blackburn Growth Axis, and one of the largest single housing development sites in Lancashire. The site is located on the edge of Blackburn, close to established housing and employment growth areas such as the M65 Corridor, Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, the home of the National Cyber Force, and Blackburn Town Centre.

The 100-hectare site is expected to deliver up to 1,500 high quality homes, new open spaces, and a new community hub. It's also ideally located as an urban extension to take advantage of, and boost, local centres and bus/rail services. The aim is to facilitate a sustainable development with strong environmental credentials. The site is allocated for housing development within the 2024 Local Plan for Blackburn with Darwen, and an ambitious masterplan will be published in early 2026. To accelerate the delivery of this regional housing growth opportunity, a £30M infrastructure package will be required to deliver all homes within the next 5-10 years.

By investing in infrastructure, skills and place, Lancashire in laying the foundations for inclusive sustainable growth that benefits every community.

Image: Artist impression prepared as part of the draft North East Blackburn Masterplan

Section Five
Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Key Employment Sites and Regeneration Priorities

Lancashire's town and city centres play a vital economic role as employment hubs, centres of commerce, and focal points for community life. These urban areas are not only engines of economic activity but also key to delivering inclusive growth through regeneration and placemaking. Revitalising town centres is essential to addressing long-standing inequalities, attracting investment, and creating vibrant, resilient communities.

These centres are complemented by a network of strategic employment sites that support growth across a range of sectors. Recent analysis by Stantec consultants identified 30 of the most strategically significant sites in Lancashire. These are categorised into 11 anchor sites and 19 complementary sites, forming part of a series of growth corridors that span the county. These corridors are designed to unlock development potential, improve connectivity, and align infrastructure investment with economic opportunity.

While Lancashire currently has a good supply of strategic employment land through to 2035 (subject to build-out rates), this Growth Plan recognises the need to plan now for the post-2035 period. This includes identifying new strategic sites and considering extensions to the existing portfolio, informed by up-to-date Local Plans developed by local authorities.

Through the LCCA, we will continue to strengthen sub-regional analysis and strategic planning. This includes enhanced cross-boundary collaboration and a more integrated approach to understanding how employment sites relate to wider transport, housing, and infrastructure priorities.

Lancashire will also continue to develop a pan-Lancashire place marketing strategy. This will highlight land and premises availability, connectivity to Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region, and the role of the LCCA in supporting inward investment. A forward-looking approach will be taken to identify sites capable of capturing growth in expanding and emerging sectors, working proactively with neighbouring areas and national partners.

The Growth Plan acknowledges the limited supply of large strategic sites across the North of England. Many existing businesses in Lancashire, particularly those with long-standing roots in the county, will need to modernise or relocate to remain competitive and sustainable. There is also a growing trend among global firms, particularly from the United States, for larger sites, often on a scale that the UK currently struggles to match.

To address this, Lancashire will seek to develop larger, more suitable sites that can accommodate a diverse range of occupiers, including domestic businesses, high-growth firms, and large-scale international investors. This will ensure Lancashire remains competitive in attracting and retaining investment, while supporting the evolution of its economic base.

Natural Environment

Lancashire's natural environment underpins the health, prosperity, and resilience of its communities. The county's landscapes have historically supported the growth of manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture, while also offering a high quality of life. Future growth depends on the conservation and enhancement of these natural resources, which are essential to the functioning of businesses, supply chains, and communities.

Clean air, land, and water are critical for public health, economic security, and environmental sustainability. A rich natural environment also helps mitigate risks from natural hazards such as flooding, extreme heat, landslips, and wildfires. Future development projects will need to consider these factors from the outset to ensure long-term viability. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been designed to support both economic growth and nature recovery, ensuring that development and environmental stewardship go hand in hand.

Knowledge and Innovation Assets

Higher and Further Education Assets

Lancashire benefits from a strong and collaborative higher and further education ecosystem, anchored by four universities and a network of further education colleges. These institutions are central to the county's innovation, skills development, and economic growth ambitions.

The Lancashire Civic University Network and The Lancashire Colleges Principals' Group foster collaboration between institutions and have contributed to the development of the Growth Plan. Together, these institutions support over 65,000 students across Lancashire and Cumbria, employ more than 10,000 staff, and generate a combined turnover of £891.2 million (2022/23)[xli]. They act as anchor institutions, contributing to local economies, communities, and public services.

University Profiles

The University of Lancashire (formerly University of Central Lancashire)A

The University of Lancashire is an international, multi-campus university tracing its roots back to 1828. It is one of Lancashire's largest regional anchor institutions with teaching campuses in Preston and Burnley, and training campuses in Blackburn, Fylde, and across the county. The University collaborates on research with major international organisations, including the United Nations, the World Health Organisation, the European Space Agency, and NASA. It has established active partnerships with NHS trusts, police constabularies, and local, regional, and global businesses, working with more than 7,000 enterprises across various priority sectors.

Lancaster University

Lancaster University is consistently ranked in the top 15 of UK Higher Education Institutions and top 150 globally. Its reputation as a research-intensive institution is balanced by high educational standards and its respected position as an innovative and effective catalyst for change. Lancaster focuses on key societal challenges and specialises in multi and inter-disciplinary innovative engagement. Lancaster places equal emphasis on research, education, and engagement, and acts as local anchor institution, active facilitator, and enabler for securing opportunities that benefit communities locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. The University contributes nearly £2 billion to the economy and produces a range of social goods from skills and spin-outs to community projects and policy support.

Edge Hill University

Edge Hill University is a campus-focused institution prioritising the delivery of skills, talent, and innovation for the four regions it serves. Acting as a hub between Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, and Cheshire, the University excels in teaching, innovation, business support, and world-leading research. Graduating over 3,500 students each year, the University has invested over £53 million in a long-term campus development programme, including a new Life Sciences building to house new degree programmes and research teams in engineering, mathematics, physics, chemistry, economics, politics, and graphic design to meet regional skills shortages. The University generates a total GVA uplift of £175.9 million across the UK economy, with £121.3 million directly benefiting the local economy of West Lancashire, and supports 2,695 jobs across the UK.

The University of Cumbria

The University of Cumbria has four locations across Cumbria, as well as its largest campus in Lancaster, Lancashire. Building upon 150 years of higher education, the University serves around 14,500 students and employs 1,200 staff. The Lancaster campus offers programmes in Business, Health, Education, and Teacher Training, all of which contribute real-world benefits to the region. Key partners include BAE Systems, Sellafield, Morecambe Bay Health Trust, Enterprising Cumbria and Rolls Royce. The University is an important higher education asset in Lancashire and continues to enhance its collaborative efforts through the Civic University Group.

Section Five
Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Further Education Colleges

Lancashire offers an exceptional landscape for further and higher education, as well as technical and vocational training. The county is home to nine General Further Education Colleges and two Sixth Form Colleges. Several institutions are recognised as national centres of excellence in key sectors such as maritime and nuclear. In addition, Myerscough College, a leading specialist land-based college of national importance, operates multiple campuses across the North West.

- Blackburn College
- Blackpool and The Fylde College
- Blackpool Sixth Form College
- Burnley College
- Cardinal Newman College (also a sixth form college)
- Lancaster and Morecambe College
- Myerscough College
- Nelson and Colne College
- Preston College
- Runshaw College
- West Lancashire College

Each year, Lancashire's colleges provide education and training to over 90,000 young people and adult learners, covering a wide range of qualifications from entry level to postgraduate study. These colleges play a vital role in supporting social mobility, inclusion, and community cohesion. More than 10 percent of higher education students in Lancashire study at a college, compared to a national average of around 4 percent. The colleges also train nearly 10,000 apprentices annually, and two-thirds of the county's 16–18-year-olds are enrolled in college-based education, alongside provision from school sixth forms and independent training providers.

With a combined turnover of nearly £300 million, Lancashire's colleges employ over 6,000 people and make a significant contribution to the local economy. For every £1 of public funding invested, the colleges deliver an estimated £15 in economic benefit over the lifetime of their students.

Colleges in the region maintain strong partnerships with both public and private sector organisations, working with over 10,000 businesses to co-design and deliver a responsive curriculum. These partnerships help employers recruit, train, and upskill their workforce, improve productivity, and respond to emerging opportunities. The Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology, launched in 2024, is a key initiative bringing together colleges, universities, and businesses to deliver world-class higher technical education and increase the supply of highly skilled workers across priority industries.

Business Growth and Enterprise

Modernising Lancashire's business support ecosystem is central to driving sustainable economic growth. The Growth Hub continues to play a pivotal role in connecting businesses with expert guidance, funding opportunities, and peer networks. Efforts are underway to improve access to capital and strengthen investor readiness, ensuring that high-potential enterprises can scale effectively and attract private sector investment.

Lancashire's economy is underpinned by a strong business and professional services sector, including legal, financial, and consultancy services. These industries not only provide essential support to other sectors but also contribute significantly to employment and productivity across the county.

At the heart of this ecosystem are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which make up the vast majority of Lancashire's business base. SMEs are vital drivers of innovation, around 60 % of local employment, and community resilience[xlii]. Supporting their growth and competitiveness is key to unlocking Lancashire's full economic potential.

We will review the position of the Growth Hub in respect of the national approach to business support, ensuring it remains responsive to the evolving needs of Lancashire's diverse business landscape.

Research, Innovation, and Specialist Capabilities

Lancashire's higher and further education institutions are aligned with the Growth Plan's priorities and are actively delivering innovation and skills programmes across key sectors. Examples include:

- Shared Prosperity Fund projects supporting SMEs in advanced engineering, manufacturing, creative industries, digital, AI, and net zero
- North West Cyber Security Connect for Commercialisation (NW CyberCom), a £1.2 million Research England-funded project led by Lancaster University to build a cyber commercialisation ecosystem in partnership with regional universities
- The £5 million EPSRC Cyber Focus Project, developing research-led impact partnerships across the North West, led by Lancaster University with partners including the University of Lancashire and University of Cumbria

AMRC North West

Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC NW)

Part of the University of Sheffield, AMRC North West is based at the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and collaborates with manufacturers of all sizes to de-risk the adoption of advanced technologies. Its mission is to help businesses improve processes, adopt new materials, enhance competitiveness and productivity, achieve decarbonisation goals, and pivot into emerging supply chains.

AMRC NW offers a broad range of capabilities, including additive manufacturing, precision machining, automation, battery pack assembly, 5G connectivity, haptics, knowledge capture, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, end-to-end digital transformation, and industrial decarbonisation. It hosts the UK's largest 5G manufacturing testbed and is home to the country's only Low Carbon Smart Factory Demonstrator. A new additive manufacturing centre is currently under development in Darwen, with the aim of establishing a regional cluster that will position Lancashire as a national leader in this transformative technology.

Modernising Lancashire's business support ecosystem is central to driving sustainable economic growth.

Section Five
Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Skills for Growth and Inclusion

The Lancashire Growth Plan is underpinned by the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework (2024), developed in consultation with employers, providers, and stakeholders. Skills are a critical enabler of Lancashire's economic vision—supporting business growth, attracting inward investment, and improving residents' access to new opportunities.

The LCCA provides a platform to better integrate economic and skills strategies, supported by the Lancashire Business Board. Through new devolved arrangements, the LCCA will:

- Influence a wider range of skills providersA
- Directly commission the Adult Skills Fund to meet emerging economic needs
- Develop innovative programmes aligned with national initiatives such as the Get Britain Working Plan

A key initiative is the Lancashire Skills Escalator, which will create an integrated skills system focused on progression and improving employment prospects. A strong partnership with the Integrated Care Board and health partners will also address rising economic inactivity, recognising the link between health and employment. Lancashire is leading one of the country's Work Well Partnership vanguards, aiming to support residents into good employment and improve overall wellbeing. The Connect to Work programme is due to launch in July 2025. The localised Get Britain Working Plan, Get Lancashire Working, is in development and will be published alongside the Growth Plan. This will build on the partnership working with the Integrated Care Board and health partners, JobCentre Plus, and skills and employment providers to boost the local employment rate and stem the growth in economic inactivity.

The four themes of the Skills Framework are:

- Future workforce: Building a talent pipeline aligned with labour market needs
- Skilled and productive workforce: Enhancing skills in technology, digital, AI, and green sectors
- Inclusive workforce: Supporting unemployed and inactive residents into sustainable employment
- Social value: Embedding and capturing social value across programmes

The Lancashire Careers Hub supports all 162 secondary schools, special schools, alternative providers, and colleges across the area to develop inspirational careers provision, working in partnership with employers, including the Cornerstone Employer Group, to build a future talent pipeline that is work-ready.

The Growth Plan aims to increase economic participation by reducing inactivity, improving health outcomes, and easing pressure on public services. This includes:

- Improving transport connectivity and travel-to-work options
- Expanding broadband coverage to support remote and hybrid working
- Collaborating with the Integrated Care Board, DWP, DHSC, and employers to re-engage individuals with the labour market

Evidence suggests that supporting inactive residents back into work could release up to £1.4 billion per year into the Lancashire economy[xliii]. Through the Get Lancashire Working Plan, these efforts will be aligned with the Adult Skills Fund and the Lifelong Learning Entitlement, enabling more flexible access to higher-level qualifications.

By investing in skills, we're investing in Lancashire's future, unlocking potential, driving innovation and ensuring every resident has the opportunity to thrive in a changing economy.

Libraries will also play a key role as trusted, accessible venues supporting digital skills, literacy, and health and employment programmes.

Health Innovation and Research

Working with the Integrated Care Board, our local Health Innovation Network has collaborated with Innovate Lancashire to create a cohesive innovation strategy that aligns health sector innovation plans with Lancashire's broader economic goals, informing the Lancashire Innovation Plan. This includes developing the Lancashire and South Cumbria Health Innovation Eco-System to maximise local innovation impact. High engagement with Innovate Lancashire has effectively aligned and enhanced plans for Lancashire.

The county's four universities are major contributors to the health and education workforce, training professionals across medicine, allied health, social care, and education. Research partnerships span NHS trusts, social care providers, charities, and the voluntary sector, with strengths in:

- Stroke and palliative care
- Health inequalities
- Cardiorespiratory research
- Applied health and workforce development

Section Five
Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Key initiatives include:

- Healthy Generations Hub (HGH): Improving health literacy among children and young people in deprived areas
- Health Innovation One: Providing co-location, events, and wellbeing activities for businesses and communities
- £5 million Health Determinants Research Collaboration: A partnership between Lancaster University, Blackpool Council, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals, and the voluntary sector to inform policy and service delivery
- Health Research Institute at Edge Hill University: Supporting interdisciplinary healthcare research across Lancashire

Sustainability and Behaviour Change

Lancaster University is investing £57 million in campus decarbonisation, including a Low Carbon Energy Centre. The Centre for Global Eco-Innovation has supported over 700 SMEs and delivered significant environmental savings between 2012 and 2023.

Edge Hill University's SustainNET supports grassroots organisations in driving behaviour change and delivering sustainable development, net zero, and green initiatives across the region.

Civil Society and the VCFSE Sector

Lancashire is home to 10,800 civil society and VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise) organisations. These organisations employ 29,596 individuals and support 238,515 volunteers. The sector plays a vital role in Lancashire's social, economic, and environmental development, contributing across a wide range of areas including employment and skills, health and social care, cooperatives, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, economic development, and local infrastructure.

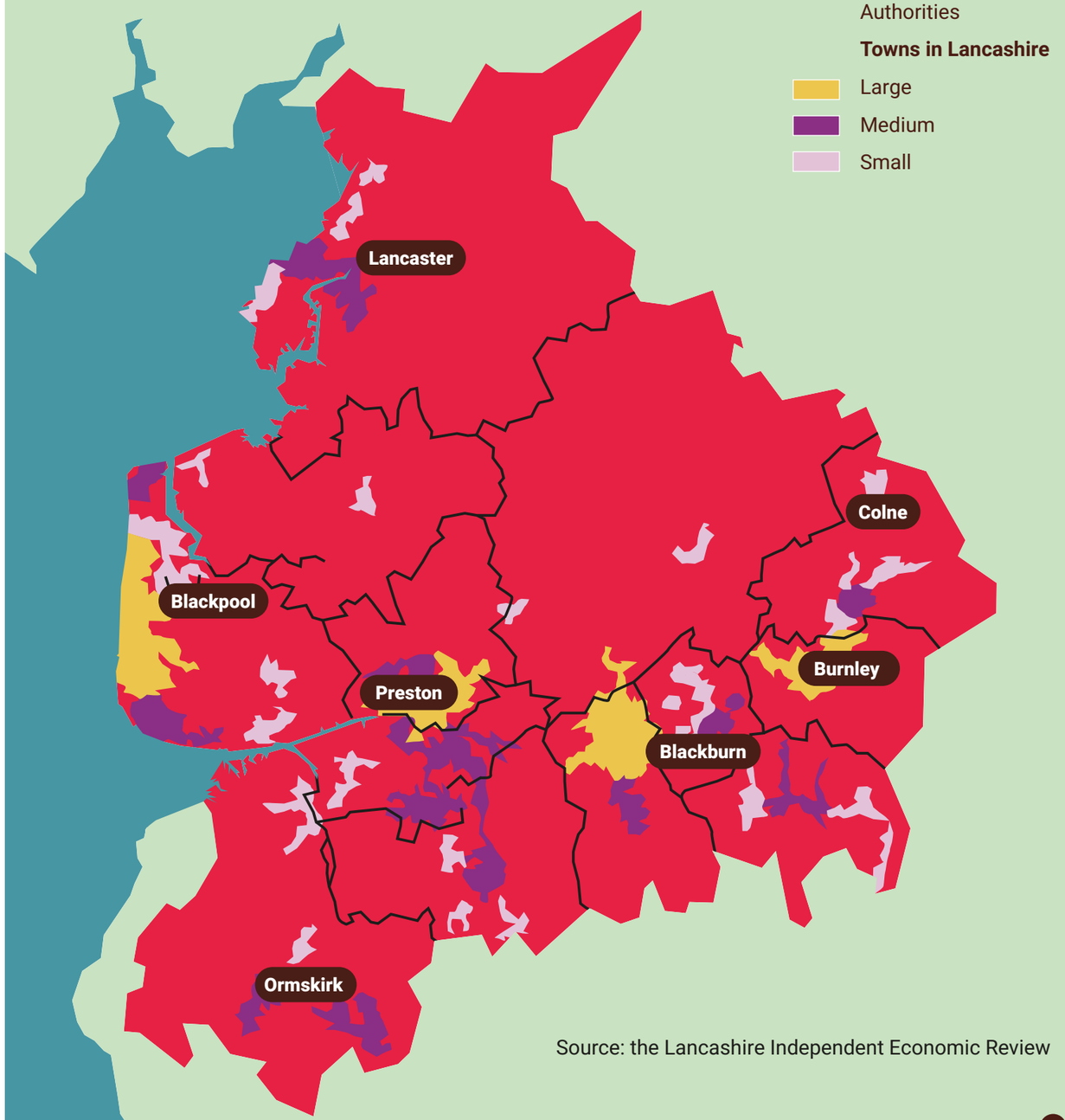
This sector is a key partner in delivering inclusive growth, supporting vulnerable communities, and enhancing quality of life across the county.

Data and Evidence

Lancashire Data Observatory

The Lancashire Data Observatory is an emerging alliance of local authorities, academic researchers, and industry experts focused on sub-regional research and analysis. This collaborative forum aims to strengthen place-based strategies by enhancing the use of data and evidence in decision-making. By working closely with higher and further education institutions, the Observatory will help regional and local partners better understand their impact and contribution to the priorities outlined in Lancashire's Vision for Growth.

The Size and Location of Towns in Lancashire



Source: the Lancashire Independent Economic Review

Section Five
Foundations for Growth: Strategic Enablers

Case Study: Preston – A Strategic Gateway and Knowledge Hub for Lancashire

Preston is a key gateway city in the North, connecting nearly 400,000 residents, 40,000 students, and 20,000+ businesses. With a significant regional impact, it plays a vital role in driving innovation, services, and inclusive growth across Lancashire. A report exploring the role of the city has been commissioned, with stakeholder input to inform the Growth Plan.

Strategic Opportunities

- **Digital & Creative Industries**
  This fast-growing sector has a strong foundation and is poised for significant expansion by 2030. It supports high-tech innovation in defence, AI, and energy, reinforcing Preston's role in future-facing industries.
- **Professional Services Expansion**
  A well-established sector with a strong economic contribution. Future growth will be substantial, requiring new office space and closer collaboration between the University of Central Lancashire and industry.
- **Entrepreneurship & Productivity**
  Despite notable business growth, productivity challenges remain. Strengthening start-ups and innovation has the potential to deliver a transformative boost to the local economy by 2030.
- **Business Events & Tourism**
  Plans for a new convention centre will attract regional and global events, reinforcing Preston's position as a knowledge and service hub where people connect and collaborate.

Transformational Projects Strengthening our Foundations for Growth

The following four transformational projects will underpin economic growth, improve connectivity, and enhance quality of place.

- **Preston Station Quarter** – A major regeneration initiative focused on creating a vibrant, mixed-use district around Preston Railway Station, enhancing connectivity and economic activity. The scheme will also unlock new development sites and improve the public realm to create a more welcoming and accessible city gateway.
- **Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan** – A comprehensive plan to revitalise Burnley's town centre and canalside, supporting retail, leisure, housing, and employment growth. It will enhance the town's appeal to investors and visitors while celebrating its heritage and improving links between key destinations.
- **Strategic Rail Programme** – A coordinated programme of rail infrastructure improvements to enhance east-west and north-south connectivity across Lancashire and beyond. The programme will support inclusive growth by improving access to jobs, education, and services for communities across the region.
- **Talbot Gateway Skills and Education Campus (Multiversity)** – A flagship development in Blackpool integrating education, business, and civic uses to support skills, innovation, and regeneration. It will help attract and retain talent in the region, aligning education provision with future workforce needs and industry demand.

Source: Metro Dynamics. Preston Economic Statement for Preston Partnership. Presented at the #InTheCity: Growing Preston's Economy event, 26 June 2025 [xliv].

Section Six
Partnering with Government: Unlocking Lancashire's Growth Potential

Section Six
Partnering with Government: Unlocking Lancashire's Growth Potential

Our Proposals for Growth

To fully realise the opportunities outlined in this Growth Plan, the LCCA will unite local and national partners to champion the region's unique assets and unlock their full potential.

Our Local Commitment

To achieve our vision for growth, we will:

- Focus new devolved powers and resources on unblocking and delivering transformational growth through targeted investment in economic development, transport, and skills.
- Mobilise business leaders and local communities to promote Lancashire's strengths and attract investment.
- Invest in a data observatory that combines research and business insight to support evidence-led decision-making and the development of business and investment cases for projects.

Lancashire's future is built on partnership – by aligning local ambition with national support, we can unlock transformational growth and deliver outcomes of national significance.

Securing Government Partnerships

Lancashire is seeking targeted policy and investment support from government to help deliver our 12 transformational projects. These projects will accelerate growth and deliver nationally significant outcomes across the following areas:

1. National recognition of strategic industrial strengths

Lancashire's advanced engineering and manufacturing corridor is of national importance. We seek recognition and support for:

- The Global Combat Air Programme, a UK-led initiative with Italy and Japan to develop a sixth-generation stealth fighter. Development is set to begin in 2025, with production from 2035, involving up to 1,000 suppliers across the three nations.
- The Zero Emission HGV Supply Chain, led by DAF – Leyland Trucks, focusing on battery electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles, creating opportunities for new suppliers and technologies.
- The AUKUS Submarine Programme, a trilateral agreement between the UK, US, and Australia to develop nuclear-powered submarines. BAE Systems in Barrow-in-Furness is expanding its workforce from 10,000 to 17,000 to support this and the Dreadnought programme, offering significant supply chain opportunities for Lancashire.
- The Rolls-Royce SMR Programme, which aims to deliver factory-built nuclear power plants. This initiative is expected to create 40,000 jobs in the UK by 2050 and generate £52 billion in economic benefit, with over 80 percent of each SMR's value sourced from the UK supply chain.
- Digital Transformation across Lancashire's advanced engineering and manufacturing, defence, health, and public services sectors.

2. Strengthening the Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing supply chain

To secure Lancashire's share of these opportunities, we propose:

- Investment in a Lancashire supply chain hub and a STEAM centre of excellence to address skills shortages, upskill the current workforce, and attract new talent.
- Support for small and medium-sized enterprises to adopt digital technologies, improve productivity, and integrate into local and cross-sector supply chains.
- Assistance for SMEs to diversify into new markets, including the creation of a dedicated cluster for small modular reactors.
- Support for international supply chain partnerships with countries such as Australia, Italy, Japan, and the United States, building on university-led global networks.
- Collaboration between academic institutions and industry to commercialise technologies aligned with regional strengths.
- Investment in digitisation and equipment upgrades to enable rapid scaling of businesses and meet demand across aerospace, automotive, defence, energy, and space sectors.

3. Digital and Cyber innovation

Lancashire is well-positioned to lead in digital and cyber innovation. We are seeking investment to support the National Cyber Force HQ and associated programmes in research, skills, and industry engagement including:

- Advancing place-based initiatives such as the Blackburn Cyber and Skills Campus and Innovation Quarter, as part of the wider Blackburn Growth Axis.
- Advancing Preston Station Quarter proposals as part of the Preston Regeneration Board.
- Expanding the Multiversity skills campus in Blackpool to support digital and technical education.

4. Energy affordability and clean growthA

To remain competitive, the UK must address high energy costs. Lancashire calls for:

- Investment in clean energy infrastructure to reduce business costs and unlock growth.
- Alignment of green jobs and skills programmes with devolved funding to support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

5. Industries of the future

Lancashire is ready to lead in emerging industries by building on existing capabilities. We are seeking support to:

- Develop sovereign uranium enrichment capacity at Springfields Fuels to support future nuclear reactors.
- Support the transition to new nuclear at Heysham power stations.
- Advance autonomous flight technologies for civil, military, and space applications at the Altitude Facility in Warton.
- Deliver the Silicon Sands low-carbon data centre at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and secure national recognition as an AI Growth Zone.
- Build the Green Economy by exploiting the AMRC's Low Carbon Smart Factory Demonstrator—a unique facility in the UK.

Section Six
Partnering with Government: Unlocking Lancashire's Growth Potential

6. Skills and workforce development

To meet the demands of a changing economy, Lancashire must refocus investment in skills and employment. We propose:

- Continued support for the Lancashire Careers Hub to help young people transition from education to employment.
- Local prioritisation of devolved funds, including Skills Bootcamps, Skills and Growth Levy flexibilities, and realignment of 16–19 provision to better reflect labour market needs and progression towards an integrated skills and employment deal.
- Strategic collaboration between local authorities, employers, and training providers to ensure the workforce is equipped for future opportunities.
- Partnership with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology to expand digital, cyber, and AI skills, address digital exclusion, and build on the UK's largest manufacturing 5G testbed at AMRC to enhance regional connectivity.
- Alignment of Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health and Social Care programmes to reduce economic inactivity through integrated work, health, and skills support through devolved funds.
- Support from DEFRA, DCMS, and National Lottery distributors to align arts, heritage, rural development, sport, and civil society programmes with economic growth.
- Greater collaboration between training providers and industry to co-design and deliver programmes that address workforce gaps.
- A return to short, flexible, and modular training models to support upskilling and retraining for working-age adults, helping to embed a culture of lifelong learning.

7. Transport infrastructure

A modern, integrated transport network is essential. We propose:

- Upgrades to the M65 Growth Corridor and other key road networks to improve freight movement and unlock economic opportunities.
- Development of a business case for a fourth River Ribble crossing in Preston.
- Strategic rail improvements, including new stations, electrification, and reinstatement of key lines to improve east-west connectivity and links to Manchester Airport and the Port of Liverpool.
- Implementation of dedicated freight rail infrastructure to support high-value manufacturing and attract inward investment.
- Exploration of light rail networks to connect major population centres and growth zones, improving access to employment.
- Expansion of Lancashire's Superbus network to enhance public transport and reduce congestion.

Lancashire is ready to lead in emerging industries by building on existing capabilities.

Junction 5 of the M65 at Blackburn

Section Seven

Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation

Section Seven
Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation

Governance

The Lancashire Growth Plan will be delivered through the new devolution arrangements established under the LCCA. As Lancashire's strategic leadership body, the LCCA is addressing long-standing challenges of underinvestment and is committed to driving inclusive and sustainable growth across the county.

Through collaborative working with local authorities, businesses, and public service partners, the LCCA is strengthening Lancashire's strategic voice at regional, national, and international levels. This approach underpins the development of compelling investment propositions and supports the delivery of the projects set out in the Growth Plan appendices.

To support this ambition, the LCCA has developed a new project prioritisation framework. This framework provides a structured and transparent method for assessing strategic fit, impact, and deliverability. The LCCA will use this framework to guide the development of investment cases, support project sponsors, and unlock progress, ensuring that the most impactful initiatives are brought forward for delivery.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of the Growth Plan will be monitored through a robust performance management framework led by the LCCA. A dashboard of measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed in collaboration with partners to track progress and assess impact. This will include alignment with the national Social Value TOMs (Themes, Outcomes, Measures) Framework.

Indicative measures include:

Economic Growth and Development

- GVA growth rate: Annual percentage increase in Gross Value Added.
- Business start-up rate: Number of new businesses established per year.
- Investment levels: Public and private investment attracted to the region.
- Export growth: Annual percentage increase in export value.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

- Transport infrastructure projects completed on time and within budget.
- Public transport usage: Increase in ridership.
- Road and rail connectivity: Improvements in travel times and network integration.
- Digital connectivity: Percentage of the region with access to high-speed internet.

Skills and Employment

- Skills gap reduction: Fewer employers reporting skills shortages.
- Apprenticeships: Number of individuals engaged.
- Attainment levels: Percentage of residents with Level 4+ qualifications.A
- Reduction in economic inactivity: improved employment rate.

Quality of Place and Culture

- Cultural events and participation: Number and attendance of major events.
- Tourism growth: Increase in visitor numbers.
- Environmental quality: Improvements in air, water, and land indicators.

Section Seven
Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation

Housing and Community Development

- Housing units built: Including affordable homes aligned with Local Plans.
- Local Plan coverage: All planning authorities with up-to-date, sound Local Plans.
- Public satisfaction: Survey-based measure of satisfaction with local amenities.

Inclusive Growth

- Average gross household income
- Employment rate: Working-age population in employment.
- Quality of life index: Improvement in Index of Multiple Deprivation rankings, aiming to ensure no Lancashire district ranks among the 30 most deprived nationally.

Monitoring Tools

- Progress reports: Regular updates on achievements and areas for improvement.
- Stakeholder feedback: Input from businesses, residents, and local authorities.
- Budget adherence: Projects delivered within allocated budgets.
- Timeline adherence: Projects completed within planned schedules.

Key Actions

To ensure the effective delivery of the Growth Plan, the following actions will be taken in partnership with the Lancashire Data Observatory:

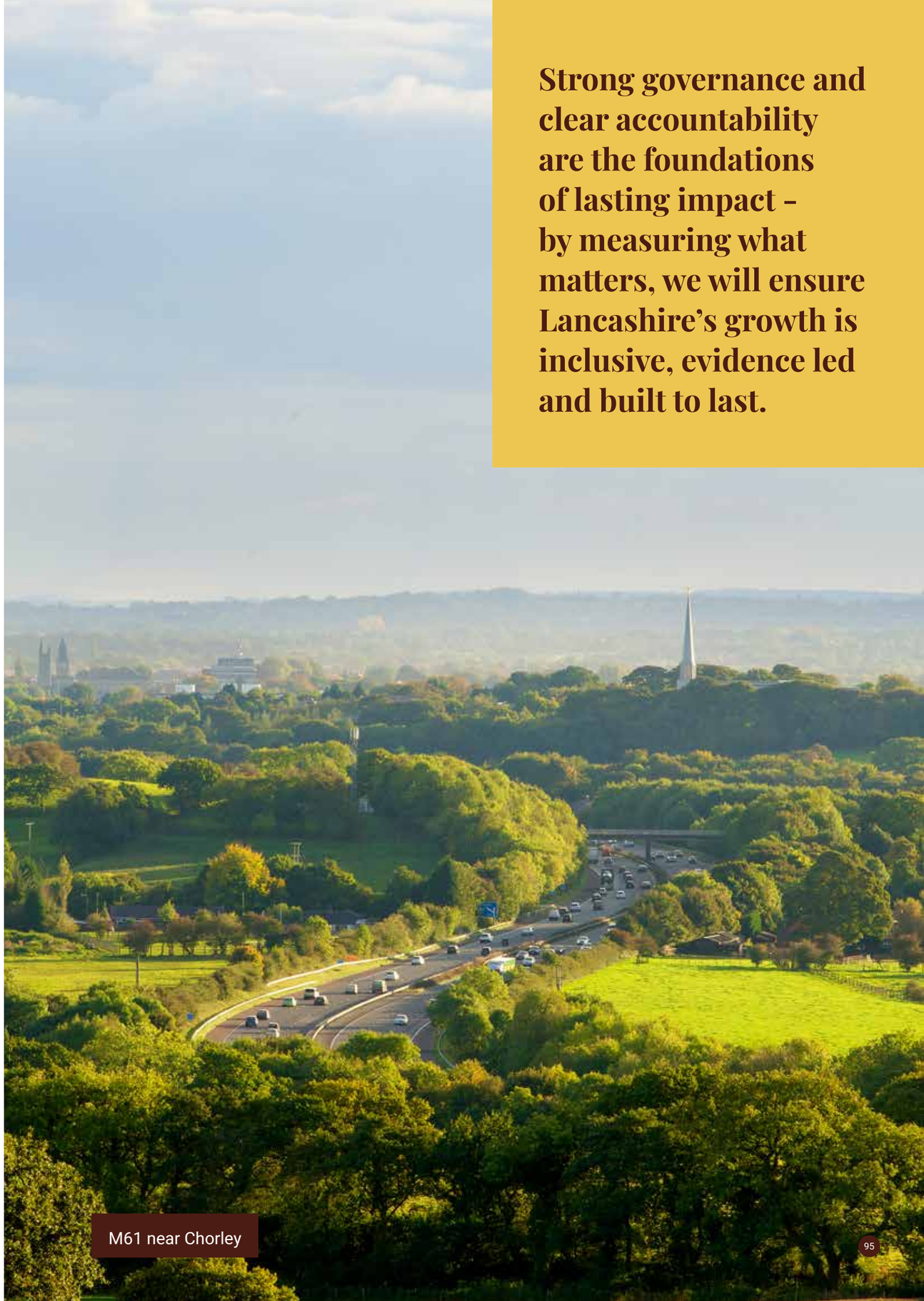
- Develop measurable KPIs to track progress and assess impact.

The Data Observatory will lead the development of a comprehensive performance dashboard, incorporating economic, social, environmental, and infrastructure indicators. This will include alignment with national frameworks such as the Social Value TOMs.

- Regularly publish progress reports and collect stakeholder feedback.

The Data Observatory will coordinate the publication of regular performance updates and facilitate structured engagement with stakeholders, including businesses, residents, and local authorities. This will ensure transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

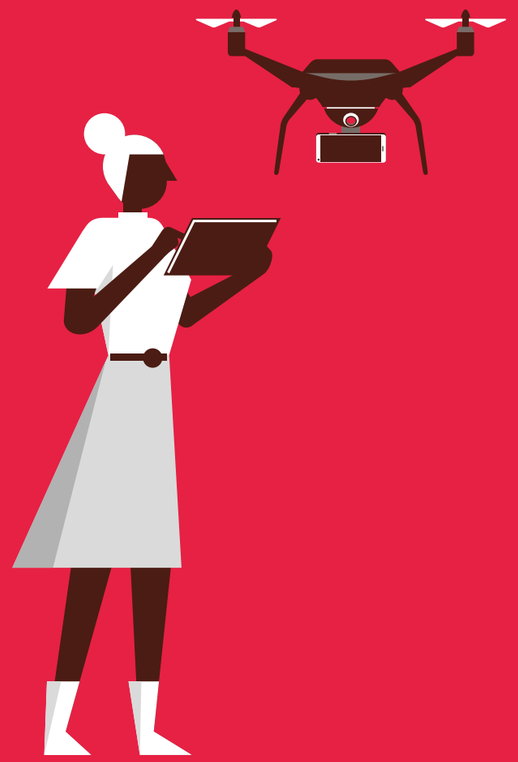
Strong governance and clear accountability are the foundations of lasting impact – by measuring what matters, we will ensure Lancashire's growth is inclusive, evidence led and built to last.



M61 near Chorley

Appendix A

Transformational Projects



The LCCA has developed a dynamic pipeline of projects, designed to deliver substantial economic, social, and environmental benefits. With the right support and investment, these projects will drive inclusive growth, foster innovation, and boost global competitiveness.

This appendix highlights the selection of transformational projects. These projects stand out due to their strong alignment with the Growth Plan's strategic goals, their capacity to address spatial inequalities, and their ability to generate impact beyond a single locality. They reflect Lancashire's ambition to lead in sectors such as, advanced engineering and manufacturing, clean energy and digital innovation.

It is important to note that this list does not represent the full breadth of growth initiatives within the Lancashire Growth Plan.

A comprehensive overview of all the other pipeline projects can be found in the separate document Appendix B, available at lancashire-cca.org.uk.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and Innovation Hub

A site of international significance, Samlesbury Enterprise Zone can enable transformational economic growth for the whole of Lancashire. Designed to support advanced engineering and manufacturing, hi-tech and research-led sectors, including cyber and robotics, the 120-acre site is primed to become a hub of world-class innovation, Industry 4.0 processes, and disruptive R&D.

The site sits strategically at the heart of Lancashire and will act as an anchor development for several other emerging economic opportunities. These include the Preston Station Quarter, Blackburn's Cyber Skills and Education Campus and Innovation Quarter, and the wider M65 East Lancashire Corridor. The site is adjacent to BAE Systems and accommodates the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre North West (AMRC NW).

The site is ready for development and has undergone significant remediation and plot preparation, unlocked through the provision of utilities and a dedicated spine road.

The location of the National Cyber Force in the Samlesbury area provides opportunity to harness new corporates, SMEs and talent into the region. Funding to build the first phase of an Innovation Hub has been secured through Devolution. This Hub will harness this growing tech sector potential by being home to a series of programmes, funding initiatives and events to draw in new community members and establish Lancashire as the centre of cyber security technologies.

Samlesbury Enterprise Zone is a catalyst for Lancashire's innovation-led growth, uniting world-class research, advanced engineering and manufacturing, and cyber technologies to unlock global opportunity.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Warton Enterprise Zone (EZ), featuring the University of Lancashire's Altitude facility

The Warton Enterprise Zone (EZ), featuring the Altitude facility, is a thriving ecosystem that brings together industry, entrepreneurs, leading academic and government institutions to advance next-generation technology and skills capability in the exploitation of future aviation and space markets. The site includes the defence and technology prime, BAE Systems, alongside the University of Lancashire's Altitude facility, which pioneers a new cluster of future air and space technology.

A recent PWC Validation study confirmed the Warton EZ site had the potential to deliver significant regional benefits, across multiple aviation high growth technology platforms. This includes capturing new revenue and investment from future aviation and space technology markets, with the unmanned aerial systems market expected to grow at 8% per annum, contributing £45 billion to the UK economy by 2030. Fostering an innovative and collaborative ecosystem between private, public, and academic sectors will support the development of the regional STEM talent pipeline, create resilient sovereign supply chains and create new employment opportunities. Significant public and private funding is needed for infrastructure to support cutting-edge capabilities.

Altitude features one of Europe's largest indoor netted environments for Unmanned Aerial System design and testing, alongside research labs, classrooms, a business incubation hub, and a multi-use event space.

The goals are to deliver industry-leading technologies, foster collaboration, and enhance lifelong learning. The impact of this initiative kickstarts wider Warton EZ activities, leveraging strengths in aerospace, space, engineering, and cyber application sectors.

Through the Growth Plan, we aim to capture investment to accelerate regional development and next-generation technology opportunities. Leveraging Warton EZ and Altitude will boost the skilled workforce, partnerships, and growth. Enhancing the University of Lancashire's teaching and research in next-generation technology will improve regional workforce development and business offerings. Promoting and attracting international investment and partners will further support these initiatives.

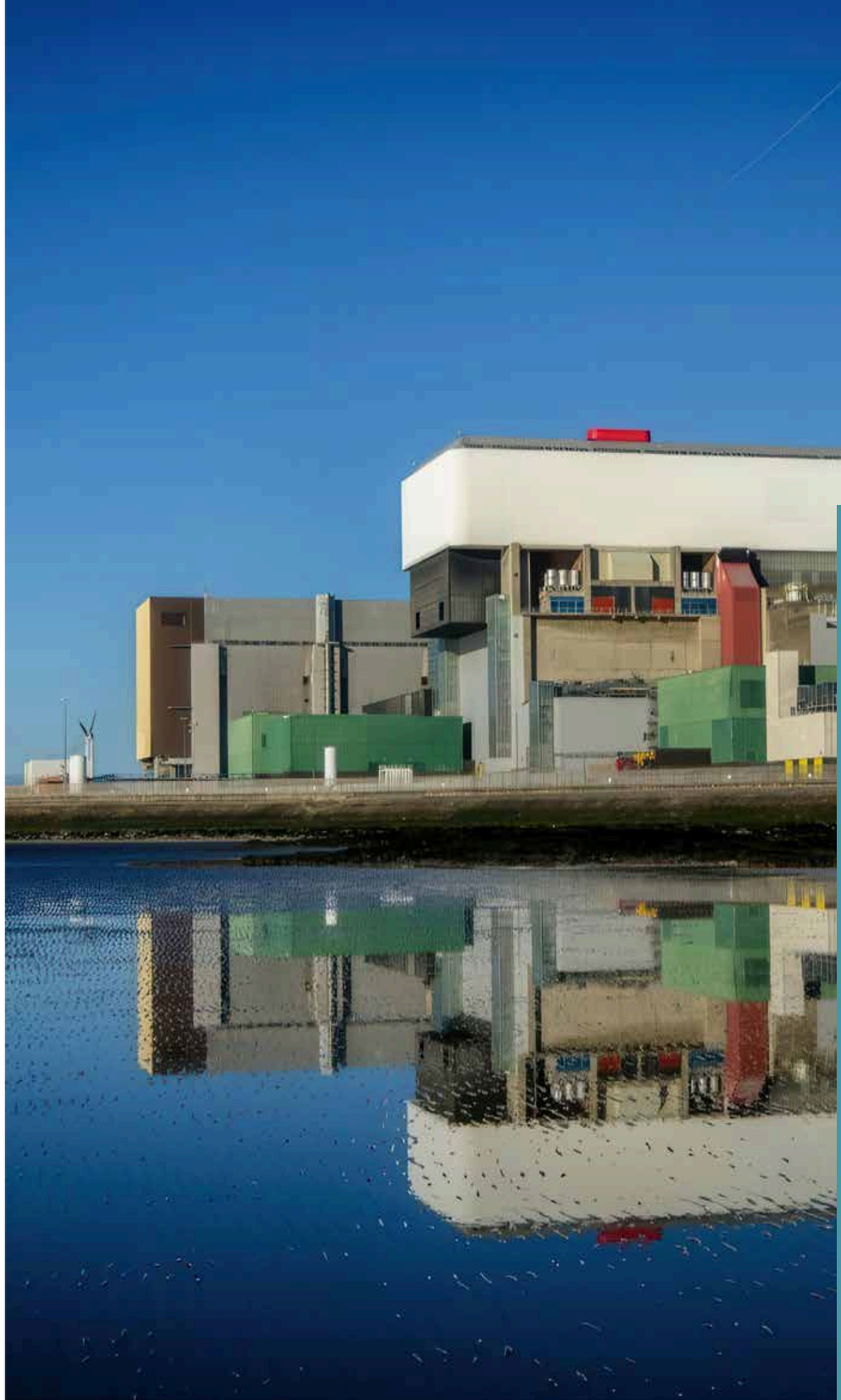
Warton Enterprise Zone is building on the momentum of the Altitude facility to lead a new era of innovation, advanced engineering, and aerospace excellence. It is complementing other Enterprise Zones across a key Lancashire corridor to strengthen the region's position in next-generation technologies.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Heysham Nuclear Power Stations (EDF)

Heysham's nuclear power stations play a crucial role in Lancashire's economy and energy supply.

EDF's recent decision to extend the operational life of Heysham 1 until 2027 and Heysham 2 until 2030 underscores their importance. This extension helps maintain energy security and supports local employment. Looking ahead, EDF has expressed intentions to keep these stations running for as long as possible, subject to inspections and regulatory approvals. The UK government has also recognised Heysham as a potential site for future nuclear power stations, which could further secure its role in the region's energy landscape.



Heysham Nuclear Power Stations are a cornerstone of Lancashire's energy infrastructure, providing secure, low-carbon power and sustaining hundreds of skilled jobs. Their continued operation and future potential as a site for new nuclear development represent a major opportunity for regional growth, energy resilience, and national decarbonisation.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Springfields (Westinghouse UK)

Westinghouse's Springfields site has been manufacturing world class nuclear fuel, and related products, for almost 75 years. The 80 hectare site is today one of the most advanced nuclear fuel generating facilities in the world, with its Oxide Fuels Complex being the UK's only commercial fuel fabrication facility. Utilising advanced manufacturing processes, the Springfields site produces around 32% of all the low-carbon electricity generated in the UK.

Springfields, is recognised as a world leader in safety, quality, environmental, and technological standards. Springfields has excellent infrastructure and connectivity. In 2023, the UK government awarded Westinghouse Electric Company three grants totalling £10.5m to upgrade and expand the Springfields facility to support the country's development and deployment of next generation nuclear reactors. Further support from Government is required to ensure the continued success of the site.

Springfields is a strategic clean energy asset, supporting the UK's nuclear future and low-carbon transition. As the UK's only commercial nuclear fuel facility. Recent investment helps to strengthen its role in next-generation reactor development and secures high-value jobs in advanced manufacturing.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Blackburn Cyber Skills and Education Campus and Innovation Quarter

The Campus and Innovation Quarter are key to the delivery of a £250m investment framework for Blackburn Town Centre, the largest development of its kind in the North West. Public investment has been secured for the first phase of the Campus development, valued at £60m, including a high-quality office and teaching facility, offering up to 100,000 sqft of new space, and a new cyber business centre with up to 15,000 sqft of contemporary accommodation to meet sector demands. Centred on the regeneration of the former Thwaites Brewery and Council sites, it's part of the ambitious Blackburn Growth Axis plan which will deliver £1bn of new economic activity in the borough over the next 10 years.

The site is the closest strategic development to the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone making Blackburn an integral part of the Government's North West Cyber Corridor between Lancaster and Manchester.

The Campus and Innovation Quarter connects with new growth opportunities generated by business clusters and HQ developments anchored by global companies such as Euro Garages and Assystem, and new development opportunities at J5 on the M65 which will deliver up to 1 million sqft in employment space for new business growth. Opportunities for health innovation at Royal Blackburn Teaching Hospital, linked to Burnley Hospital, located near to the M65 Growth Corridor, will further enhance the scale and impact of development plans.

Blackburn's Cyber Campus and Innovation Quarter is unlocking £1bn in new economic activity and driving skills, regeneration, and sector growth at the heart of the regional cyber corridor.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Strategically positioned on the North Atlantic fibre loop, Blackpool's Enterprise Zone and Silicon Sands are unlocking global connectivity and sustainable AI infrastructure, driving £14.3bn in economic value and placing Lancashire at the forefront of the UK's digital and green economy.

Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and Silicon Sands

Located just off Blackpool's seafront, Blackpool Airport boasts one of the UK's most successful Enterprise Zones.

With growth of over 2,600 jobs already achieved, and an estimated £300m of additional private sector development potential, 25 acres of newly unlocked commercial land is primed for development for commercial use at the EZ's Eastern Gateway. Accommodation within secure, landscaped plots (ranging from 15,000sq ft to 100,000sq ft) is available, with power, utilities and property access in place.

The EZ also includes the groundbreaking Silicon Sands project with the potential to become a Strategic AI and Sustainable Digital Infrastructure Hub for Lancashire and an AI Growth zone. The EZ is positioned on the North Atlantic Loop, a major transatlantic fibre artery connecting America and Europe with the fastest speeds. This strategic location places Blackpool and Silicon Sands within the same availability zone as Dublin, one of Europe's leading data centre hubs, ensuring ultra-low latency connectivity for AI, cloud, Edge and high-performance computing applications. Silicon Sands is directly connected via national fibre carriers to the UK's main internet exchanges, including IX Manchester, IX Leeds and Linx London offering seamless low-latency access to hyperscale cloud providers and global AI infrastructure. Blackpool also benefits from its own ultra-low latency fibre network, which enables high-speed, high-bandwidth digital services with minimal latency—an essential requirement for next-generation AI, private 5G, and high-performance computing.

With the support of Lancaster University, Silicon Sands has been pioneering the concept of net-zero, sustainable data centres, leveraging immersion cooling technology and waste heat recovery. The project is shovel-ready, with an initial 2–6MW exemplar AI data centre set to launch, supplying recovered heat to the Sandcastle Water Park (eventually to become part of a wider District Heat network) one of the UK's largest indoor water parks. This demonstrator will establish the foundation for the expansion of the Silicon Sands digital campus, with 32MW of power already available and a clear pathway to gigawatt-scale capacity by the early 2030s.

The project will capitalise on over three gigawatts of offshore wind power currently in development in the Irish Sea, set to come ashore at the EZ. By harnessing curtailed renewable energy, Silicon Sands presents a unique opportunity for Lancashire to emerge as a major AI Growth Zone, aligning directly with the UK Government's ambition for regional AI hubs with pathways to 500MW+ of power. It has the potential to provide 1GW of Data Centre capacity with access to 3.4GW of Green Power, creating £14.3bn of GVA, 14,000 jobs and reducing fuel poverty. This initiative will therefore drive economic growth, attract global investment, and create high-value tech jobs, reinforcing Lancashire's position at the forefront of the UK's green and digital economy.

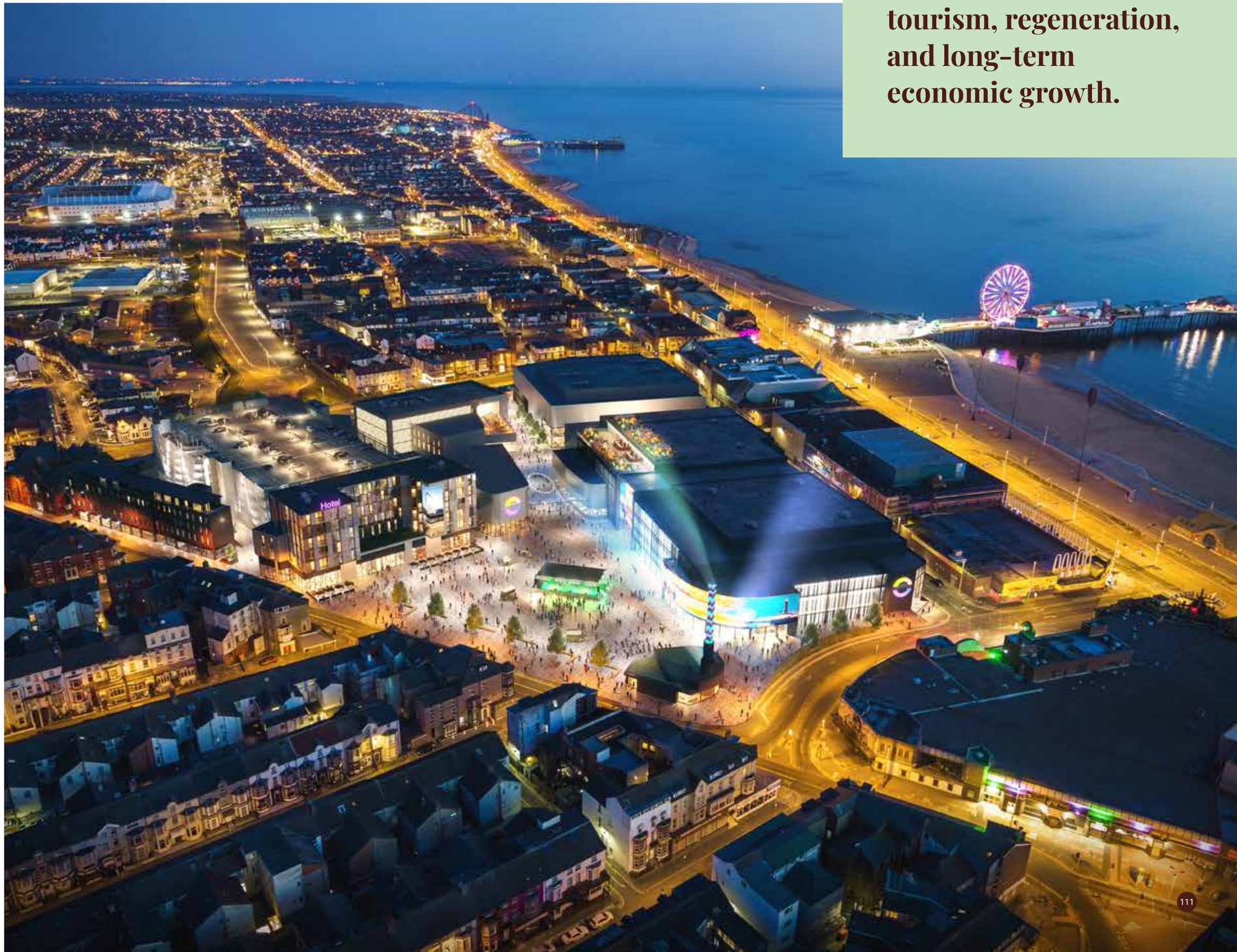
Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Blackpool Central offers prime seafront investment, creating a world-class leisure destination that drives tourism, regeneration, and long-term economic growth.

Blackpool Central Leisure Development

The former Central Station site is one of Blackpool's most strategically important development sites, and its redevelopment is central to the ambition of developing a new, exciting and unique world class tourist destination with a vision to provide a unique leisure quarter which underpins Blackpool's appeal as a national tourist destination, driven by exceptional quality, sustaining wider resort regeneration, and providing compelling new reasons to visit Blackpool.

The 7.15ha site occupies a prime seafront location on Blackpool's famous Golden Mile and within the shadow of Blackpool Tower. It lies on the southern edge of the town centre and enjoys direct connection with the M55 via the Central Corridor. The ambition for the site is to ensure that proposals for development deliver landmark attractions of the highest quality to transform the visitor economy and resort appeal and supports its long-term future as a year-round world class resort destination, securing economic growth and regeneration within the resort and providing quality employment opportunities.



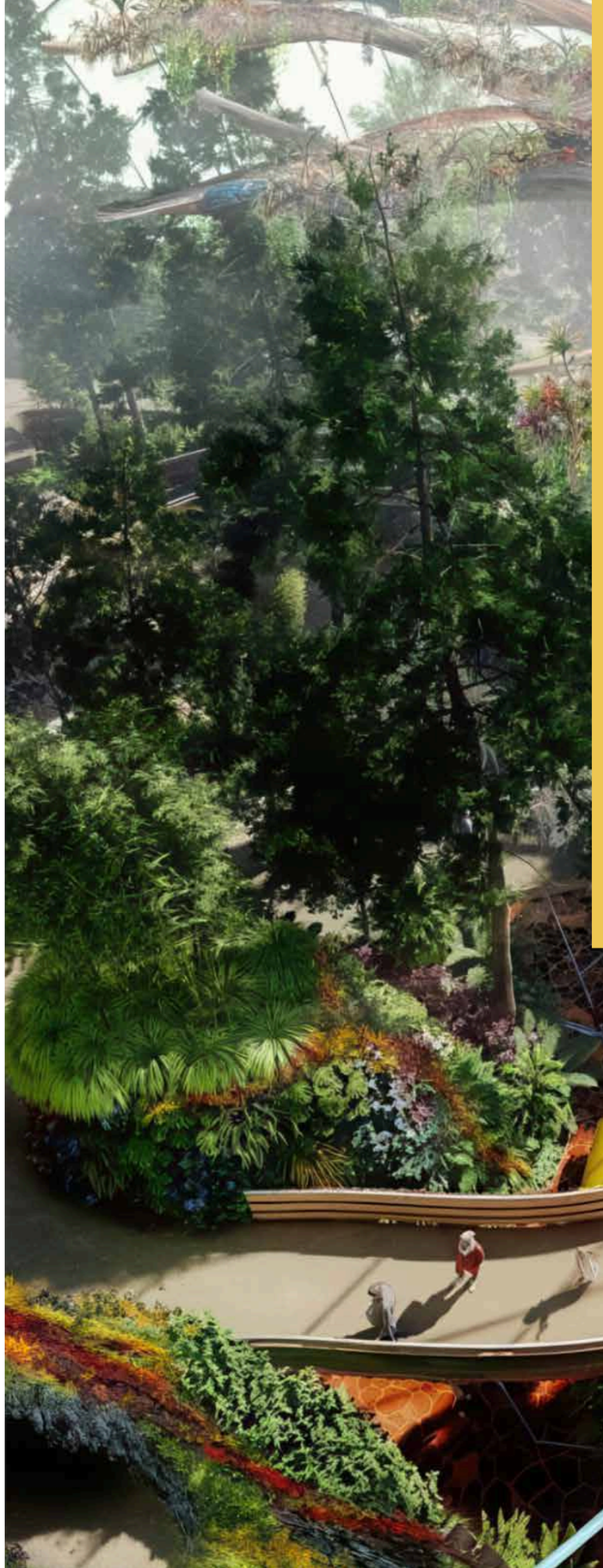
Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Morecambe Seafront and the Eden Effect

Morecambe, and the wider North Lancashire area, is set to directly benefit from the Eden Project Morecambe scheme. Conceived by the team behind the world-famous Eden Project in Cornwall, the 36-acre development was given the green light by Government in March 2023, along with £50m of Levelling Up funding, to allow work to commence on the £100m project.

Described as a destination which 're-imagines Morecambe as a seaside resort for the 21st Century', it will be a ticketed tourist attraction. Focusing on the key themes of education, ecology, wellbeing and community, Eden Project Morecambe will combine indoor and outdoor experiences that directly link to the internationally significant natural environment of Morecambe Bay.

Being less than two hours travel time from most of the North's main conurbations, and with a local catchment area of ten million people, Eden Project Morecambe is anticipating attracting up to 740,000 visitors a year. It is also expected to help create over 1,250 jobs and inject £150m GVA per year into the North West economy.



Eden Project Morecambe will drive regeneration, tourism, and environmental innovation.
By attracting over 740,000 visitors annually and creating more than 1,250 jobs, it will stimulate inclusive economic growth, enhance regional identity, and unlock the potential of Morecambe Bay as a sustainable coastal destination.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Preston Station Quarter

Investment in Preston is driven by the 10 year City Investment Plan[xlv], outlining a long-term vision to transform the city with close to £1bn already invested or committed over the next few years. At the forefront of growth within the region, Preston is undergoing a dramatic transformation, capitalising on the National Cyber Force HQ facility on Preston's doorstep, to create huge opportunities for commercial development and city living.

The Preston Station Quarter Strategic Regeneration Framework identifies four quadrants surrounding Preston Train Station: Preston Station East; Preston Station West; County Hill; and University Walk. It sets out a blueprint for the future development of the area, covering 43 hectares, to create a thriving commercial district next to Preston Railway Station, one of the most accessible locations in the North.

The vision includes the provision of Grade A offices, high-density housing, and quality public realm, to create an attractive place to live, work, and visit. This work also enhances Preston Station as Gateway to Lancashire including improved east-west connectivity through better links to the national rail network.

Preston Station Quarter is a key transformational initiative within the Lancashire Growth Plan, unlocking the city's potential as a dynamic commercial and residential hub. Anchored by nearly £1bn of investment and the proximity to the National Cyber Force HQ, the project will deliver high-quality office space, housing, and public realm, strengthening Preston's role as a regional growth engine and enhancing east-west connectivity across Lancashire.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

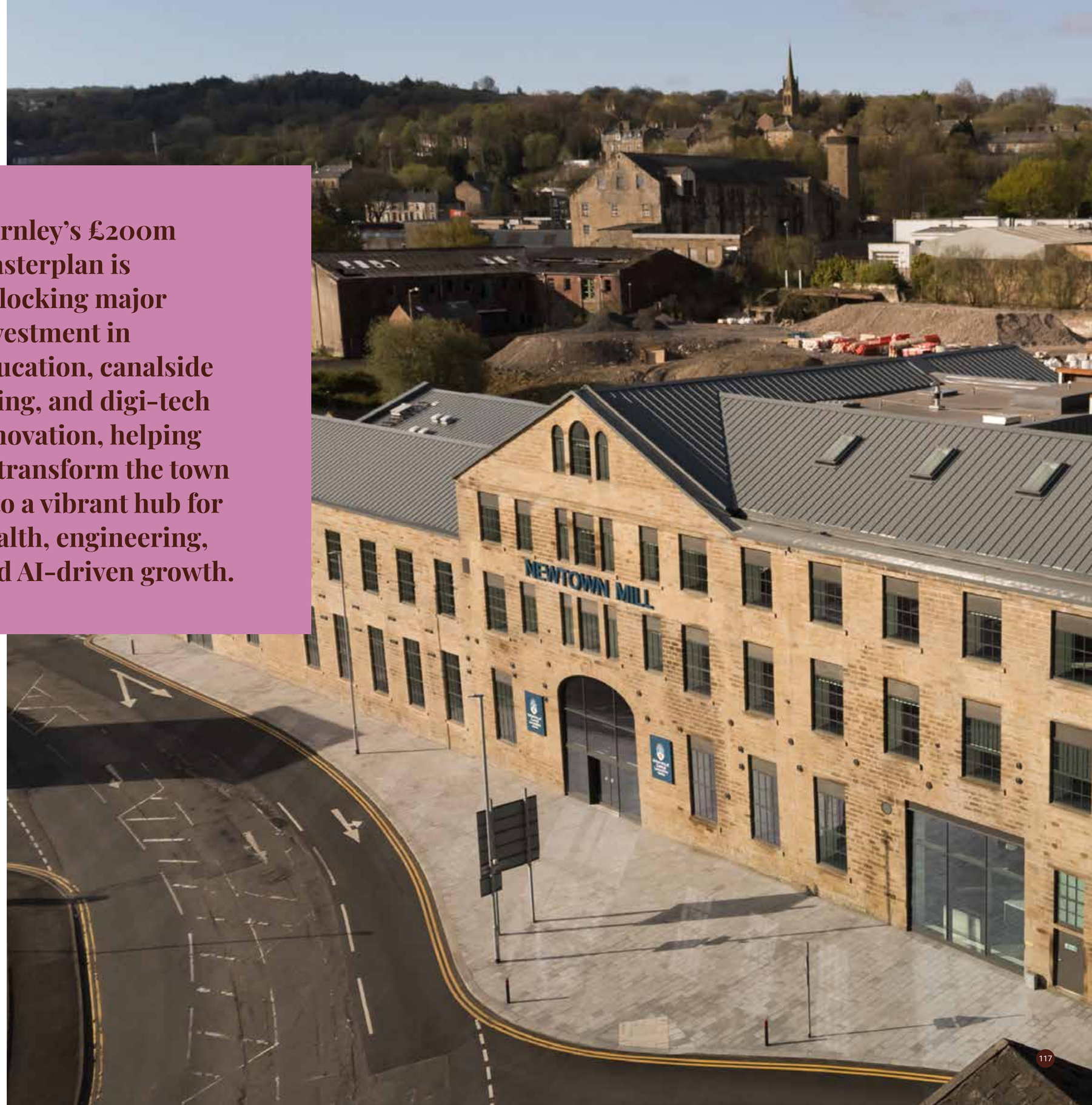
Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan

Burnley Town centre and Canalside Masterplan is a £200m plan to transform the town. Burnley Town Centre provides a significant travel to work, travel to learn and leisure hub in the east of the County.

Significant progress has already been made with circa £40m investment in an iconic Canalside Campus for the University of Lancashire occupying over quarter of a million square foot of floorspace with capacity for up to 5000 FTE students and scope for further development. The campus focusses primarily on medicine and health care, working closely with the East Lancashire Hospitals and Cyber and Digital in collaboration with the area's digi-tech sector. Alongside a University campus the canalside offers opportunities to develop canalside living close to the town centre with excellent rail connectivity to Lancashire, North Manchester and West Yorkshire.

The town centre is bucking the trend in terms of occupancy with recent investment in a new leisure development at Pioneer Place. The masterplan identifies interventions for housing and business space. A digi-tech hub, with a focus on bridging digital and AI solutions with the advanced engineering and manufacturing sector is a key piece of the planned investment in the town centre.

Burnley's £200m masterplan is unlocking major investment in education, canalside living, and digi-tech innovation, helping to transform the town into a vibrant hub for health, engineering, and AI-driven growth.



Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Strategic Rail Programme

Lancashire's Central Belt, running west to east from the Fylde Coast to East Lancashire, is the primary driver of our regional economy, comprising many of our strategic economic assets, including FE/HE institutions, R&D hubs and strategic growth locations including Preston Station, Blackburn Cyber Skills and Education Campus, Silicon Sands and Burnley Town Centre.

The railway between Blackpool North and Burnley Manchester Road forms the public transport spine for our Central Belt. However, although 70% of Lancashire's residents live within five miles of the railway line, our region is fragmented into four economic sub-areas, which are focused on more established north-south transport routes. Poor rail connectivity along this east-west axis is a critical challenge for our region (e.g. a mixture of slow and semi-fast services, slow journey times and poor accessibility at our stations). Unacceptable train operator performance, especially on services linking Blackburn and Manchester, which are among the most unreliable in the country, impacts the ability of businesses to recruit skilled staff, adds to employers' costs and reduces productivity, holds back inward investment and undermines visitor experiences, particularly in East Lancashire.

Previous study work for Lancashire and Yorkshire partners demonstrated that improving strategic transport links across our Central Belt, and connecting through to North and West Yorkshire, could yield significant productivity benefits through agglomeration and expanded labour markets. Improved rail links could play a major role in enhancing connectivity between and unlocking new high value growth in our urban centres, including Blackpool, Preston, Blackburn and Burnley.

Through our new Local Transport Plan, we will be exploring options to transform rail connectivity across Lancashire, with a particular focus on the east-west axis serving the Central Belt. Working in partnership with Great British Railways, we will explore options to cut journey times, increase service frequencies and introduce higher capacity, more reliable trains linking the Fylde Coast to East Lancashire and beyond. We will also consider options to reinstate the missing link between Colne and Skipton, alongside Clitheroe and Hellifield, which will transform connectivity with North and West Yorkshire and improve links to major centres in the North. Better linkages between East Lancashire and Greater Manchester via the rail network, to access High Speed 2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail hubs, will also be developed.

These will be integrated into the wider public transport network, including exploration of new light rail solutions, to transform public transport connectivity, which will unlock mode shift across the Central Belt, creating supportive conditions for transformational growth across our area.

Transforming east-west rail connectivity across Lancashire's Central Belt will unlock growth in key urban centres, expand labour markets, and improve access to education, employment and investment. Enhanced services, faster journey times and better integration will drive productivity and support inclusive, sustainable development across the region.

Appendix A
Transformational Projects

Talbot Gateway Skills and Education Campus (Multiversity)

Phase 1 of the Blackpool and The Fylde College Multiversity set for completion in 2027, plans are already underway for Phase 2, an ambitious expansion into the Talbot Gateway Central Business District to create a dynamic skills and education campus.

The Multiversity, which is a new concept for higher education, captures the idea of creating various (multi) and flexible pathways to higher level skills, compared to the “one size fits all” (uni) model of conventional higher education. The conventional model is the three-year residential degree and has become increasingly focused on young people, with adult numbers declining.

The Multiversity model operates very differently. The concept is based on the idea of multiple routes to higher skills, delivered flexibly in response to student, apprentice and employer need. It implies a curriculum which is based on an “escalator” of qualifications which lead to higher skills, but designed in stages, so that progression can occur as and when required over time, depending on the age, employment context, and priorities of the students and apprentices involved.

The aim is that the Multiversity will provide a new hub of ideas and practices, bringing educational partners together with students, apprentices and employers, to co-design and create new curriculum approaches, tailored to the needs of the labour market. By being in the Town Centre alongside the Multiversity Phase 1 B&FC will improve access and visibility of opportunity to support the aspirations of employers, students and apprentices across all levels of professional and technical development, training and education to the population of the Fylde Coast, Lancashire and beyond.

The Multiversity will deliver flexible, employer-led pathways to higher skills, supporting priority sectors such as health, digital, engineering and low-carbon industries. Located in Blackpool’s Talbot Gateway, it will expand access to advanced training and education, driving innovation and inclusive growth across the Fylde Coast and beyond.

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Thank you to all who have contributed to shaping this growth plan, which sets out a bold and deliverable roadmap for public and private investment to unlock Lancashire's full potential.

Find Out More About How You Can Become Part of Lancashire's Growth Story

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