



Meeting of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority - Greater Lincolnshire Business and Infrastructure Board

Date: Wednesday, 1 October 2025

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

Membership:

Mayor

Dame Andrea Jenkyns DBE

Constituent Members

Councillor Sean Matthews, Lincolnshire County Council*

Councillor Ingrid Sheard, Lincolnshire County Council

Councillor Rob Waltham MBE, North Lincolnshire Council*

Councillor Neil Poole, North Lincolnshire Council

Councillor Philip Jackson, North East Lincolnshire Council*

Councillor Stan Shreeve, North East Lincolnshire Council

*Lead Member

Non Constituent Members

Councillor Naomi Tweddle, City of Lincoln Council

Councillor Ashley John Baxter, South Kesteven District Council

Councillor Richard Wright, North Kesteven District Council

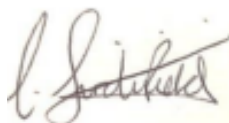
Cllr Donald Nannestad, City of Lincoln Council

Associate Member

Alison Hands, Lincolnshire Coop, Business Voice of Greater Lincolnshire

Members of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Business and Infrastructure Board are summoned to a meeting as set out above to transact the following business as set out in the agenda. Attendance of all Members is expected.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. Sirdifield', is written over a yellow rectangular background.

Lee Sirdifield
Chief Operating Officer

**GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY - GREATER
LINCOLNSHIRE BUSINESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2025**

Item	Title	Pages
1	Election of Vice Chairman	
2	Apologies and Substitutions	
3	Declarations of Interest	
4	Minutes of the Meeting of the Business and Infrastructure Board held on 25 June 2025	5 - 12
5	<p>Public Question Time</p> <p>To receive questions from the public to the Mayor, Authority Members and Board Chairs in accordance with Combined County Authority Procedure Rule 20.</p> <p>The total time set aside for questions and answers will be limited to 30 minutes with no extension of time. Questions not dealt with within this time will be dealt with by written response.</p>	
6	Chair's Announcements	
7	<p>Business and Infrastructure Board Terms of Reference</p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Lisa Tremble, Monitoring Officer, which provides an opportunity for the Board to agree its terms of reference)</i></p>	13 - 18
8	<p>Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production Fusion (STEP)</p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer, which introduces the opportunities that Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production Fusion (STEP) offers to the Greater Lincolnshire economy)</i></p>	19 - 22
9	<p>Mayoral Enhanced Water Partnership</p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Halina Davies, Strategic Lead Infrastructure and Economic Vision, which proposes the establishment of a new Enhanced Water Partnership (EWP) in Greater Lincolnshire)</i></p>	23 - 32
10	<p>The Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy</p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer, which presents a Greater Lincolnshire innovation Strategy for adoption by the Authority)</i></p>	33 - 52

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| 11 | Preparing a Greater Lincolnshire Spatial Development Strategy
<i>(To receive a report from Ruth Carver, Interim Deputy Director, which presents the potential duty of CCA's to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy to the Board and seek approval for the commencement of preparatory activity)</i> | 53 - 58 |
| 12 | GLCCA Emerging Housing Strategy Preparations for Strategic Place Partnership
<i>(To receive a report from Halina Davies, Strategic Lead Infrastructure and Economic Vision, which seeks approval to commence sifting of pipeline sites in line with agreed objectives and investment principles)</i> | 59 - 66 |

Information about this meeting

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Generally, the public seating areas will not be filmed; however, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting.

Contact

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting or for details of access to the meeting, please contact: Lincolnshire County Council Democratic Services DemocraticServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, c/o County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

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DECISIONS TAKEN WITHIN MINUTES 1-7 ARE SUBJECT TO CALL-IN, URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN WITHIN MINUTE 8 ARE NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN. THE DEADLINE FOR CALLING-IN DECISIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING IS 4PM ON FRIDAY 4 JULY 2025 OTHERWISE THEY WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM 12PM ON MONDAY 7 JULY 2025.

PRESENT:

Mayor Dame Andrea Jenkyns DBE

Constituent Members: Councillors P Jackson (North East Lincolnshire Council*) (CHAIRMAN), S Matthews (Lincolnshire County Council*), R Waltham MBE (North Lincolnshire Council*), N Poole (North Lincolnshire Council), P Jackson (North East Lincolnshire Council*), S Shreeve (North East Lincolnshire Council) and L M Kelly (Lincolnshire County Council)

**Lead Member*

Non-Constituent Members: Councillors C Leyland (East Lindsey District Council) and R Wright (North Kesteven District Council)

Others: Professor Neal Juster attended the meeting as an observer

Officers in attendance:- Lee Sirdifield (Interim Chief Operating Officer), Lisa Tremble (Interim Monitoring Officer), Ruth Carver (Interim Deputy Director), Caroline Illingworth (Interim Strategic Lead for Community and Business Engagement), Justin Brown (Lincolnshire County Council), Nicola Calver (Lincolnshire County Council), Halina Davies (Strategic Lead for Infrastructure and Economic Vision), Carolina Borgstrom (North East Lincolnshire Council) and Thomas Crofts (Lincolnshire County Council)

1 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

The meeting opened at 10.18 am and adjourned for 15 minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 10.33 am.

The Mayor joined the meeting at 10.33 am.

Councillor A Baxter raised concerns that the meeting could not proceed as it was found to be inquorate at 10.18 am.

Members introduced themselves to the Board.

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An apology for absence was received from Councillor I Sheard, replaced for this meeting by Cllr L Kelly.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this point in proceedings.

Officers gave clarification on the issuing of Declaration of Pecuniary Interest forms.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members to Grimsby Town Hall and to the first meeting of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority – Business and Infrastructure Board.

The Chairman outlined the Board's remit to Members.

4 BUSINESS STRATEGY

The Board considered a report on moving towards an Infrastructure Plan for the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority. The following matters were highlighted by officers:

- The Strategic Infrastructure Development Framework (SIDF) set the foundation for the GLCCA Infrastructure Plan – it identified key priorities and shaped early thinking.
- The Plan integrated earlier frameworks with the devolution agreement and incorporated Greater Lincolnshire's new powers and funding to shape local infrastructure and economic priorities.
- The Government's recently published industrial strategy gave guidance to the Plan, and allowed alignment between local projects and national goals.
- Energy was a core theme, with emphasis on renewables and aims to boost sustainability and economic growth.
- The Plan sought to establish three elements:
 - A pipeline of investable projects,
 - A spatial strategy for development,
 - A governance model for delivery.

The Board discussed the report, and the following matters were raised:

- Members thanked the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for their working in laying the foundation for the infrastructure plan.
- Since recent events, there needed to be a greater focus on water management – including: sea defences to protect residents and industry;
- There needed to be emphasis on an industrial strategy that protected tourism, defence, advanced manufacturing and traditional industries within the infrastructure plan.

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- Officers clarified that there would be monthly briefings to the Board going forward, which would include updates on the development of the infrastructure plan.
- Officers also clarified that an interim project manager had been placed to oversee the development of the infrastructure plan.
- Engagement would take place with partners and stakeholders to inform the development of the plan.
- The Mayor emphasised the importance of scrutiny and transparency in developing strategies.
- Utility companies presented obstacles to building developments where utility infrastructure, such as water, sewage and electrical networks, was not currently capable of serving new buildings. Some Members felt that the Authority needed to lobby the Government on this matter, as private companies were currently blocking development opportunities.
- Greater context and steer for implementation needed to be outlined in the plans.
- Members were committed to setting up joint working with business.
- Some Members felt that clean energy was not a priority, and that the aims and the goals of the Authority's strategies needed to reflect particular contexts.
- Officers clarified that comments made today would be captured to inform the development of the infrastructure plan, and that an updated document would be presented at a subsequent meeting.

The recommendations were moved and seconded, and upon being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

For: 11

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED

1. That the Board notes previous infrastructure planning progress made within Greater Lincolnshire;
2. That the Board endorses the development of a GLCCA Infrastructure Plan building on existing evidence, policy and frameworks;
3. That the Board supports the approach and timescales highlighted within the report;
4. That the Board's comments be noted to provide direction on how activity evolve and progress be monitored.

5 HOUSING PIPELINE UPDATE

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The Board considered a report on the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority work programme for Housing, and route to achieve a Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England. The following matters were highlighted by officers:

- Proposals were to align the Authority with Homes England in order to unlock strategic sites and secure funding for housing delivery.
- Funding secured from Homes England supported, and did not replace, district council funding for house building. The focus of new funding was to facilitate region-wide coordination and enable the delivery of new developments.
- Work was to progress through 2025, with a detailed delivery plan expected in early 2026.

The Board discussed the report, and the following matters were raised:

- Members agreed that more housing was desperately needed within Greater Lincolnshire and the country in general, and that additional resources to secure more house building were welcomed.
- Concerns were raised that house building was being done on a quantitative level rather than a qualitative level. The Authority needed to ensure appropriate house building supported the later life needs of the elderly; the needs of a young workforce; and specific housing for veterans.
- The Authority needed to ensure that additional funding for house building did not replace existing funding streams from Homes England.
- It was necessary that a land use strategy be investigated with central government in order to safeguard the development of appropriate housing.
- The Mayor stated that she would write to the Secretary of State on the following matters:
 - Retaining talent in Greater Lincolnshire,
 - The establishment of veteran's villages,
 - The establishment of new towns,
 - The obstructions to building development caused by utility companies.
- The issue of utilising empty homes was raised. However, it was recognised that this was a complex issue and that safeguards needed to be considered to help people release homes, which required further resources.
- Lincolnshire County Council was launching a symposium on establishing a veteran's village.
- Other issues impacting housing provision raised by Members included: developer delays, the market not providing the right type of housing, lack of brownfield site use, building on flood plains, and the connectivity of utilities.
- Strains on housing development in specific localities could be alleviated by sharing housing targets across council boundaries and offsetting building target with bringing empty homes back into use.
- A lack of skilled tradespeople needed to be addressed. More trades colleges were to be investigated to be established within Greater Lincolnshire.

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- Long-term data solutions would require further consideration.

The recommendations were moved and seconded, and upon being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

For: 11

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED

1. That the Board notes the progress and main headlines from the Greater Lincolnshire Housing Pipeline and Greater Lincolnshire Housing Market Assessment and supports the proposal for the GLCCA to apply to Homes England for further capacity funding to assist with prioritisation and site feasibility tasks.
2. That the Board supports the proposed time scales and resourcing requirements to work towards a Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England.
3. That the Board agrees that the Authority works with Homes England to explore the transition of the Housing pipeline data to the Homes England nationally hosted system at no cost, with the opportunity to migrate the data back to the Authority at any time when local hosting becomes feasible.

6 UK STEEL CHARTER

The Board considered a report on the Authority's adoption of the UK Steel Charter. Officers presented the item with direct reference to the report.

The Board discussed the report, and the following matters were raised:

- All three constituent authorities had already adopted the UK Steel Charter.
- The domestic steel industry needed to be protected, and industry could not rely on imported steel.
- Neighbouring authorities needed to be encouraged to support the Charter not just those local to the area.
- The cleaner manufacturing of steel was to be encouraged.
- The virgin steel manufactured in Scunthorpe was of the highest quality and the facilities and expertise of the workforce needed to be protected as a national asset.
- District Councils were to be encouraged to support the Charter and refresh their commitments if they had already adopted it.

The recommendations were moved and seconded, and upon being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

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For: 11

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED

1. That the Authority signs the UK Steel Charter;
2. That the Authority seeks to ensure all other Combined Authorities in England also sign the UK Steel Charter.

7 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that if they were present there could be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, part 1 of Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

8 GRANT ALLOCATION TO THE GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE COMBINED COUNTY
AUTHORITY

The Board considered an exempt report on grant allocation to the Authority.

The Board discussed the report at length and numerous amendments were heard.

After a lengthy debate, it was moved and seconded that the Board approve the recommendations subject to a number of amendments.

For: 7

Against: 3

Abstentions: 1

Councillor A Baxter requested that his abstention be recorded.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations be approved subject to the agreed amendments.

The meeting closed at 12.52 pm

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Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) Business and Infrastructure Board	
Date of meeting:	1 October 2025
Report title:	Business and Infrastructure Board Terms of Reference
Report of:	Lisa Tremble – Interim Monitoring Officer
Classification:	This report is open
Contact officer:	Lisa Tremble – Interim Monitoring Officer lisa.tremble@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk
Purpose of the report:	This report provides an opportunity for the Board to consider its terms of reference and comment on any potential changes that could be considered.
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Constituent Council Members and Non-Constituent Council Members (or their substitutes/delegates) only
Report has been considered by:	This report has not been previously considered elsewhere.
Recommendation(s): That the Business and Infrastructure Board considers its terms of reference with a view to suggesting necessary changes to the GLCCA for adoption.	

REPORT CONTENT

Information

- 1 Attached to this report is the Board's Terms of Reference for the Board to consider.
- 2 The current Terms of Reference state that "the terms of reference are to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Business and Infrastructure Board".
- 3 The Terms of Reference have not yet been reviewed by the Board, as this is the first year of the Board's establishment, however small changes have been made by the GLCCA at its previous meeting.
- 4 At its next meeting in December 2025, the GLCCA will consider any suggested amendments made by it's Boards to their Terms of Reference.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendices included with this report

The following documents are included:

- Appendix A – Business and Infrastructure Board Terms of Reference

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

No Background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

3.5C. Business and Infrastructure Board

1. Terms of Reference

- 1.1 This is an Executive decision-making Committee of the Combined County Authority referred to as one of the three Boards of the Authority. The Business and Infrastructure Board will act in a regional capacity to enable the ambitions and outcomes of the Authority of its business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment functions.
- 1.2 The Business and Infrastructure Board is authorised to carry out any Non-Mayoral business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment function¹ of the Authority or any other Non-Mayoral function related to business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment in accordance with the strategic and budgetary framework agreed by the Authority, including:
- i. progressing the ambitions and outcomes of the Greater Lincolnshire Plan and policy framework and other relevant strategies of the Combined County Authority that fall within the remit of this Board, by monitoring and reviewing the outcomes and impact of any policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan;
 - ii. progressing those elements of the Mayor's pledges that fall within the remit of this committee, ensuring alignment with the vision and policy framework of the Authority where appropriate,
 - iii. submitting, prioritising and endorsing bids for devolved and other funding,
 - iv. preparing proposals for the acquisition, servicing and sale of land
 - v. working with key partners and the Mayor to
 - a. develop and promote a shared understanding, coherent strategies and policies, and joined up service delivery, and
 - b. influence the provision of infrastructure including, digital, water and flood management
 - c. promote business growth through innovation, advice and grant support.
 - d. promote strategic sites across the region.
 - e. bring forward infrastructure to unlock sites whose progress is delayed by binding constraints.
 - vi. overseeing any project or programme in accordance with the Combined County Authority Assurance Framework²,

¹ Functions in this context are to be construed in a broad and inclusive fashion, and as including the exercise of the ancillary powers under Section 113A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. This includes business growth and productivity, business support, innovation, digital, trade and inward investment.

² Or otherwise, where the project or programme does not fall to be considered under the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Assurance Framework

with the exception of

- any function which requires a Statutory Consent where that consent has yet to be given, and
- any function which is reserved to the Combined Authority.

1.3 The Business and Infrastructure Board will contribute to the preparation of the Greater Lincolnshire Economic Assessment and the Greater Lincolnshire evidence base through specialist advice, including

- commissioning of appropriate research and studies in relation to the Authority's business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment functions and needs
- formulating, developing and monitoring procedures for public consultation of the Authority's business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment policies

1.4 It will advise the Authority and the Mayor on the development of policy, strategy and budgets and make recommendations on / to:

- i. The area-wide Business and Infrastructure Plan;
- ii. The development of the Investment Strategy and business growth, innovation and environment investment;
- iii. The acquisition, servicing and sale of land
- iv. The establishment and/or use of development areas and/or development corporations
- v. the Authority in respect of any Non-Mayoral Function which is a business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment function or functions related to business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment or any other business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment matters requested by the Authority.
- vi. the Mayor in respect of any Mayoral General Function which is business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment function or other function related business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment.

1.5 It will collaborate with other Boards/Committees of the Combined County Authority to achieve the ambitions and outcomes of the Authority.

1.6 It will engage with and hold to account those bodies involved in

- i. the delivery and operation of business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment activities within the Authority area;
- ii. the delivery and development of land and sites across the region, particularly sites whose progress is delayed by binding constraints

- 1.7 It can nominate Authority representatives on business growth, innovation, regeneration, housing and environment bodies.
- 1.8 It will respond to any report or recommendation from the Audit Committee or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The membership of the Business and Infrastructure Board shall consist of:

Voting Members

- Mayor
- Two Members/substitute members from each Constituent Authority
- Four Non constituent Members /delegate members

Non-Voting Members

- One business member appointed by the Economic Advisory Panel
- any other co-opted members

- 2.2 In appointing members to the Business and Infrastructure Board there is no requirement for political balance.
- 2.3 The Board may co-opt up to 3 additional Non-Voting Membership from partner and stakeholder bodies relevant to the remit of the Board. Further co-opted members may be appointed with the approval of the Authority.
- 2.4 Substitution and Delegations operate in accordance with the Authority Procedure Rules.
- 2.5 The Board may appoint one or more sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the Board's functions.

3. Chairing the Board

- 3.1 The Business and Infrastructure Board shall be chaired by a Constituent Member (or substitute) nominated and appointed by the Authority.
- 3.2 A Vice-Chair will be appointed by the Business and Infrastructure Board from amongst the Constituent Authority membership.
- 3.3 The Mayor is a voting member of the Board in order to allow them to act in their capacity as the Mayor, they may wish to discharge any relevant mayoral functions via the Board in order to benefit from appropriate advice.

4. Quorum

- 4.1 The quorum will be 4 voting members in accordance with the Authority Procedure Rules.

5. Voting

- 5.1 Any matters that are to be decided by the Board are to be decided by consensus of the Board where possible.
- 5.2 When a vote is required, it will be taken in accordance with the Authority Procedure Rules.
- 5.3 Non constituent members may vote on all matters unless specifically reserved to the Authority.
- 5.4 The Board may invite any Observers as it sees fit, relevant to any item of the agenda, to attend the meeting. These Observers will be able to participate in the meeting at the discretion of the Chair, however will not be able to vote on any matter.

6. Frequency

- 6.1 There will be a minimum of five Business and Infrastructure Board meetings each municipal year. (approximately every other month)

7. Review

- 7.1 The terms of reference are to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Business and Infrastructure Board.
- 7.2 The role and arrangements of the Business and Infrastructure Board will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Authority.

Document version control	
Version:	2.0
Date:	September 2025
Document approved by:	GLCCA
To be of effect from:	17 th September 2025

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) Business and Infrastructure Board	
Date of meeting:	1 October 2025
Report title:	Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production Fusion (STEP)
Report of:	Lee Sirdifield – Interim Chief Operating Officer
Classification:	This report is open
Contact officer:	Lee Sirdifield – Interim Chief Operating Officer Lee.sirdifield@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk 07500 813 650
Purpose of the report:	<p>The report introduces the opportunities that Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production Fusion (STEP) offers to the Greater Lincolnshire economy. It highlights the need for Greater Lincolnshire to consider the investments needed in business infrastructure and housing to deliver long-term benefits to the area.</p> <p>The report will be supported by a presentation from Ben Bradley, head of communications and Engagement at Step Fusion/UK Industrial Fusion Solutions Ltd.</p>
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority with the Mayor in the majority. There are no consent requirements for this paper.
Report has been considered by:	N/A

Recommendation(s):

That the Business and Infrastructure Board:

- 1) Note the content of the paper.**
- 2) Receive a presentation from Ben Bradley, Head of Communications and Engagement at STEP Fusion/UK Industrial Fusion Solutions Ltd setting out the ambitions for STEP in West Burton and the associated economic growth ambitions for the project.**

REPORT CONTENT

Information

- 1 Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) is described by the UK Atomic Energy Authority as ‘the next great breakthrough for humankind’. The next chapter of the UK’s investment in this technology will take place at the site of the former West Burton Power Station (6 miles from the Lincolnshire border) which ceased energy production in 2023, after 57 years of operation.
- 2 The STEP programme is led by UK Industrial Fusion Solutions (UKIFS), a wholly owned subsidiary of the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA). The programme will see the development of the UK’s first prototype fusion energy powerplant. In June 2025 UK Government committed £2.5bn over 5-years for fusion research and development, including STEP. This investment has the potential to bring far reaching benefits to both West Burton in Retford, Nottinghamshire where it will be located and the surrounding area including Gainsborough.
- 3 The STEP programme seeks to validate that fusion can be a power generating solution and demonstrate a route to the commercial viability of fusion. If successful, it will place the UK, and importantly Greater Lincolnshire’s economy, at the forefront of this pioneering technology.
- 4 Construction is expected to start in the early 2030’s with the plan being operational in 2040, however it is worth noting that the construction of the training facility will start much sooner. The programme is built on 6 overarching objectives:
 - Social value – skills, jobs, investment, regional infrastructure
 - Supply chain development – materials, suppliers, factories, distribution, retail and consumer
 - UK economic value – generating exports, contracts and spin-off opportunities
 - Fusion development facility – building the plant
 - Power plant demonstration – proving the technology on a commercial basis
 - Information baseline – enabling learning to accelerate future developments in fusion power.
- 5 Whilst the nearest Lincolnshire town to this development is Gainsborough, the benefit of STEP is expected to reach right across Greater Lincolnshire. Export opportunities are likely to see benefits to Greater Lincolnshire ports; housing need is likely to extend widely across the area; and investment in skills and infrastructure will benefit Greater Lincolnshire residents and businesses. There are clear opportunities for Lincolnshire to develop business opportunities from the long term and large-scale national investment and also the potential to drive investment in innovation and R&D, and to increase levels of innovation within Greater Lincolnshire by tapping into the emerging innovation ecosystem that will be associated with West Burton. The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority should therefore work closely with UKIFS over the coming years to capitalise on the opportunities that STEP presents.

- 6 The proposals create new employment opportunities. Over the next four years there will be an increased demand for skills and capabilities in specialisms such as engineering, construction, procurement, site development and management. UKFIS and UKAEA currently employ in the region of 500 FTEs on STEP. As activities gather pace, it is expected that employment numbers will grow to around 800 FTEs, with 300+ on-site. During construction this is expected to increase to around 8,000 FTEs covering all construction skillsets (e.g. planning, design, trades). The onsite training facility alone will support around 200 trainees per annum, which is why the GLCCA has invested £25,000 of UKSPF funding into a joint employment and training study for the STEP programme with East Midlands Combined Authority.
- 7 Once operational, the ongoing fusion research and development activities are likely to be supported by around 1000+ operational staff not necessarily based on site, along with long-term job creation and business growth across the supply chain. The ambition is that the region will become the heart of the new commercial fusion industry and will enable new internationally renowned innovations in this space.
- 8 A development of this scale must be supported by the availability of an appropriately skilled workforce. To ensure the right skills are in place, UKIFS will be working with the GLCCA and education and training providers across a wide range of skillsets. This will need to be considered by the Employment and Skills Board and within any future employment and skills strategies or delivery plans.
- 9 Engagement will also take place with communities to minimise any negative impact of the developments, whilst ensuring benefits are maximised. Extensive business engagement will take place to ensure that the demand for goods and services generated by the site can be met, and appropriate partnerships and export opportunities are brought forward.
- 10 The benefits of STEP will not be limited to the boundaries of any single local authority. Representatives from the GLCCA are already involved with the STEP Strategic Collaboration Group with representatives from the East Midlands Combined County Authority and other key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated response to this programme. Members are therefore asked to reflect on the positive long-term impact of the STEP programme for Greater Lincolnshire residents and businesses and how this relates to the functions of the authority across areas such transport, employment and skills, economic growth, infrastructure and housing. It is expected that this programme will play a prominent role in the future planning of the GLCCA work-programme and its emerging strategies.

Alternative options considered

- 11 This development is one of a kind. The alternative would be to not respond to or invest in the significant opportunities likely to be offered by this major investment taking place beyond the extremely close Nottinghamshire boundary and across the East Midlands, which would not be recommended to the Board.

Reasons for the recommendation

- 12 Thinking about how the growth ambitions of the project might relate to and benefit the Greater Lincolnshire area from an early point in time is paramount. There will be a number of elements that need to come together effectively and in a sequential way alongside a number of stakeholders, therefore planning for these and confirming an interest to being involved as a Combined Authority going forward is an important commitment.

IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Public sector equality duty implications

- 13 There are no equality impacts at this early stage, however they would be considered throughout any future engagement or related site/infrastructure activity the Combined Authority might have with the project.

Legal implications / comments

- 14 Not applicable at this stage.

Finance and resource implications / comments

- 15 None in relation to this presentation.

Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments

- 16 Covered in the main body of the report.

Consultation and Engagement

- 17 Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments

- 18 Not applicable.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendices included with this report

- There are no appendices included, however there will be slides presented on the day.

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Business and Infrastructure Board	
Date of meeting:	1 October 2025
Report title:	Mayoral Enhanced Water Partnership
Report of:	Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer
Classification:	This report is open
Contact officer:	Halina Davies, Strategic Lead Infrastructure and Economic Vision halina.davies@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk , 07799 074247
Purpose of the report:	This report proposes the establishment of a new Enhanced Water Partnership (EWP) in Greater Lincolnshire
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor. There are no consent requirements for this decision.
Report has been considered by:	CLT 3 and 16 September 2025

Recommendation(s):

That the Business and Infrastructure Board

- 1) Endorses the establishment of an Enhanced Water Partnership (EWP)**
- 2) Agrees to the Terms of Reference provided for the EWP**
- 3) Approves the proposed membership of the Partnership**

REPORT CONTENT

Information

- 1 As part of the devolution deal with Government, the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) committed to the establishment of an Enhanced Water Partnership (EWP) in Greater Lincolnshire.

The Role of the Partnership

- 2 The EWP will provide a focused, strategic, cross-boundary and cross-organisational approach to water, taking on a leadership and brokering role benefiting from the convening powers of the Mayor.
- 3 It will enable bespoke collaboration on flood prevention, water scarcity and water management programmes, creating an opportunity to align resources to tackle specific strategic challenges in and around greater Lincolnshire.
- 4 The partnership will be able to lobby for investment, bring forward innovative new solutions for the area, identify water assets more clearly and will focus on things over and above those normally led/delivered by local authorities or individual agencies.
- 5 The aim is to ultimately agree a high-level strategic plan for water management in Greater Lincolnshire supporting economic growth and investment, tackling key constraints, ensuring continued UK food security, supporting new housing and industrial/business development and advising on necessary changes to government policy.

What the Partnership will not do

- 6 The partnership will not provide planning advice or guidance or carry out statutory functions and responsibilities when it comes to water management, this will remain within the remit of the local authorities.
- 7 It will not replace existing forums and partnerships or the roles and responsibilities of water providers/agencies. By the same token it will not be a broad discussion forum or a means of engaging with local residents.
- 8 It will not be providing funding for major infrastructure; there are limited resources at the combined partnerships' disposal so it will need to invest wisely and lobby accordingly to bring forward strategic infrastructure funding and decision making both at local and national levels.
- 9 Finally, it will not be rewriting established local water related strategies but will work collaboratively with existing partnerships to help support actions identified through these routes.

The Enhanced Water Partnership (EWP)

- 10 The partnership should be focused with no more than 16 members plus the Chair ideally. Agenda items would be set by EWP members collectively with advice/suggestions from existing water related partnerships/forums alongside

other GLCCA advisory panels, however, the EWP would prioritise any discussions to be held.

11 Political representations would be via three constituent authority members on the EWP, and through the GLCCA Business & Infrastructure Board which will be considering key decisions coming from the EWP..

12 Suggested core membership for the EWP is as follows:

- Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire - Chair
- Water Resources East – Managing Director
- Environment Agency – Regional Director
- Chair of the GLCCA Economic Advisory Panel
- Crown Estates
- Universities of Lincoln and Hull (innovation and research connections)
- Humber Energy Board Representative i.e. Deputy Chair
- Anglian Water
- Severn Trent Water
- Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA)
- National Federation of Builders (NFB)
- National Farmers Union (NFU)
- Assistant Directors for Growth/Economy (Constituent Authorities - agenda dependant, one representative per meeting)
- GLCCA Officer (level to be determined)
- Member from each of the three Constituent Authorities

Suggested Co-opted membership (Agenda Dependant):

- Mayor or strategic representative occasionally for Hull and East Yorkshire CCA invited on certain Humber related agenda items
- Homes England
- National Grid (Strategic representation as required)
- Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
- Associated British Ports (substantial port ownership in the area rest of UK)
- WAVE Utilities
- Humber Freeport
- Canal and Rivers Trust
- UK Catapults depending on water topic and potential links i.e. Satellite, energy, advanced manufacturing, etc
- CATCH UK
- Drainage Boards

13 Not everyone listed above would need to attend every meeting as attendance would be agenda led in consultation with the Mayor as Chair. We are suggesting that it would meet four times a year initially and this could be reviewed if deemed too infrequent.

14 Proposed Terms of Reference for the EWP have been drafted and are attached as Appendix A for the Board to review. These will be subject to change as the EWP becomes more established.

Existing Partnerships & Forums

- 15 There are already a number of water related partnerships already in place in Greater Lincolnshire when it comes to flood risk management, water scarcity management and strategic planning. These partnerships include the Lincolnshire Flood and Water Management Partnership (Lincolnshire County Council), North Lincolnshire Strategic Water Management Board, North East Lincolnshire Strategic Water Resources Group, and North East Lincolnshire Flood Risk Group. A workshop was hosted by GLCCA with local authority leads involved in these various partnerships in early August 2025 to map them out, understand their membership and functions, and to discuss the possibility of consolidating some of them to avoid duplication and impact on availability of key members. This work will hopefully lead to some changes to existing structures and resulting aims and objectives.
- 16 In order to ensure connectivity between some of these existing water management partnerships across Greater Lincolnshire and understanding the role that the GLCCA wishes to successfully provide, we are proposing that the Chairs of these partnerships attend the EWP on an agenda led basis and where appropriate feed in advice focused on enabling growth from these fora.

Establishment Timescales

- 17 Timescales provided below are estimated depending on availability of the Chair and proposed membership should an approval to proceed be secured by the Business and Infrastructure Board today.



Alternative options considered

- 18 The alternative would be to rely on existing established water partnerships in Greater Lincolnshire; however, these are currently quite separate in terms of areas covered (Lincolnshire County, North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire) and whilst some cover economic growth to an extent, focus is not on brokering, lobbying or potential collaborative cross agency investments.

Reasons for the recommendation

The new EWP will address clear gaps in innovative and strategic water related solutions to enable growth.

IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Public sector equality duty implications

20 The implications are set out in detail in the body of the report.

Legal implications / comments

21 There are no legal implications for the EWP at this stage.

Finance and resource implications / comments

22 The three constituent authorities, combined authority and relevant member organisations will provide resources to support the work emerging from the EWP.

Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments

23 Once established the EWP will consider local and national policy in relation to most of its activity and to inform actions proposed to the Business and Infrastructure Board.

Consultation and Engagement

24 The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Constituent local authorities leading on water management via a workshop 5th August and subsequent email correspondence
- Business and Infrastructure Advisory Group 1st September and via email
- CLT on 9th and 16th September

Overview and Scrutiny Comments

25 Not Applicable.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendices included with this report

The following documents are included:

- Appendix A – EWP Terms of Reference

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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Greater Lincolnshire Enhanced Water Partnership (EWP)

Terms of Reference

Purpose

Benefitting from the convening powers of the Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire this is an advisory group of the GLCCA Business & Infrastructure Board; it seeks to provide leadership and brokering on water related requirements and solutions across Greater Lincolnshire to enable and accelerate growth, in support of Combined County Authority and Mayoral functions.

We wish to establish an effective partnership via the convening powers of the Mayor to tackle key challenges Greater Lincolnshire faces in terms of water management, whether they be coastal, protecting the natural environment, linked to water intensive industry or flooding related; supporting the coordinated development of the water management narrative and offer to industry, government and investors and the development of place-based propositions.

It will be a space where agencies can come together to identify shared interests, align resources, jointly tackle key challenges and bring forward innovations through coordinated plans and activities. It is intended that the EWP will support the development and agreement of an Action Plan for water management with key stakeholders across Greater Lincolnshire and the UK.

We see it operating as single contact point for engagement with other GLCCA advisory groups such as agri-food, energy, manufacturing and transport, and existing flood and water partnerships to facilitate a whole systems approach to utilities and infrastructure coordination and planning.

The Enhanced Water Partnership will create an enhanced space of systemised thinking to support agriculture, tourism, economic growth and new housing that:

- Protects the UK from food shortages caused lack of water supply and flood risk;
- Enables strategic collaboration on flood prevention and water management programmes whilst aligning with existing partnership programmes;
- Supports business growth across key industries, identifying new innovative approaches to achieving this successfully;
- Considers flood risk and scarcity in the context of housing growth across Greater Lincolnshire;
- Collaboratively aligns resources to tackle specific challenges;
- Lobby's for investment or necessary changes to policy
- Works in partnership to identify where capital investments are required to support transformative water related priorities;
- Builds a clearer understanding of existing and potential strategic water assets;
- Develops a high-level strategic plan for water management not duplicating statutory strategic plans being developed through our local authorities;
- Shares best practice approaches and learning on integrated water management to inform government reforms;
- Collaborative development of investment plans, aligning investment opportunities to unlock strategic sites, protect assets and improve the lives of our communities;
- Collectively discusses various coastal and tidal adaptation strategies from an overarching high growth perspective (Humber 2100+, Lincs 2100+ and Fens 2100+).

This partnership will not change the role and responsibilities of existing Risk Management Authorities or existing statutory duties to produce Local Flood Risk Management Strategies.

Membership

The membership of the Enhanced Water Partnership shall consist of a maximum of 17 Core members as follows:

- Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire - Chair
- Water Resources East – Managing Director
- Environment Agency – Regional Director
- Chair of the GLCCA Economic Advisory Panel
- Crown Estates
- Universities of Lincoln and Hull (innovation and research connections)
- Humber Energy Board Representative i.e. Deputy Chair
- Anglian Water
- Severn Trent Water
- Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA)
- National Federation of Builders (NFB)
- National Farmers Union (NFU)
- Assistant Directors for Growth/Economy (Constituent Authorities - agenda dependant, one representative per meeting)
- GLCCA Officer (level to be determined)
- Member from each of the three Constituent Authorities

Core representatives will be proposed by Officers and appointed by the Combined County Authority for a term of four years, however there will be the opportunity to co-opt additional members over a shorter related timescale on the back of special interests and focused agenda items. Attendance of these will vary at each meeting and will be by invitation only.

A Member will cease to be a Member of the EWP if they fail to attend three meetings in a rolling twelve-month period. Any suggested substitutes should be fully briefed by their organisation prior to attendance, have good experience in water management, and should be able to take decisions on behalf of their organisation.

Chairing the Partnership

The EWP will be Chaired by the Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire, and a Vice Chair will be nominated via GLCCA Officers and confirmed by the Business & Infrastructure Board.

In the absence of the appointed Chair and Vice Chair the EWP will appoint a Chair for the meeting.

Reporting

The EWP will nominate a representative to report findings and recommendations to the following Authority governance bodies:

1. Business and Infrastructure Board

If the nominated member is unable to attend a Board meeting, then they may nominate a substitute from the partnership to attend on their behalf.

Quorum

The quorum will be four voting members including the Chair.

Voting

The EWP is not a decision-making body. Any matters that are to be proposed to the Business and infrastructure Board and relevant organisational Boards by the EWP are to be determined by consensus where possible.

All Members of the EWP will be entitled to vote on any proposals requiring decision making outside of the EWP. The Chair will not have a casting vote.

Frequency

Frequency will be decided by the Business & Infrastructure Board and will be flexible depending on tasking.

Review

The terms of reference are to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Document version control	
Version:	5.0
Date:	19 September 2025
Document approved by:	
To be of effect from:	

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Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) Business & Infrastructure Board	
Date of meeting:	1 October 2025
Report title:	The Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy
Report of:	Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer
Classification:	This report is open
Contact officer:	Caroline Illingworth Interim Strategic Lead for Community & Business Engagement Caroline.illingworth@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk 07385 938242
Purpose of the report:	This report presents a Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy for endorsement.
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor. There are no consent requirements for this decision.
Report has been considered by:	Corporate Leadership Team on 16 th September 2025
Recommendation: That the Business & Infrastructure Board: 1) Endorses the Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy by the Authority at Appendix A for adoption by the Authority.	

REPORT CONTENT

Information

1. This paper presents an Innovation Strategy and a recommendation that this strategy be adopted by the Authority.

Background

2. In 2024, as part of the preparations for devolution, the three constituent authorities agreed to convene an Innovation Commission to develop an Innovation Routemap for Greater Lincolnshire.
3. The Commission was led by the Private Sector, consisted of key stakeholders from the public and private sectors, and the University of Lincoln.
4. The resulting [Innovation Routemap](#) was launched in November 2024, and now forms the basis for this proposed new Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy.
5. There is an ambition to co-develop an Innovation Action Plan with UKRI, and having an adopted Innovation Strategy is a pre-requisite for Action Plan development.

Strategic Aims

6. The proposed Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy aims to:
 - 6.1. Create a culture of innovation to increase business investment in R&D and improve productivity within our businesses;
 - 6.2. Target opportunities related to growth priorities which will increase the number of high-paying innovation-oriented jobs within Greater Lincolnshire;
 - 6.3. Convene partners and build connections to increase access to funding and investment, increasing the share of public innovation spending going to Greater Lincolnshire businesses.

Strategic objectives

7. The proposed Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy is designed around two main objectives:
 - 7.1. Objective One: Supporting all businesses to innovate; and
 - 7.2. Objective Two: Accelerating strategic growth and innovation opportunities.
8. Objective One focuses on creating the supporting structures to aid increased innovation activity, delivering innovation support to businesses, and enhancing capital assets to provide spaces for innovation and collaboration.
9. Objective Two focuses on three Innovation Accelerators which the Innovation Commission identified as having the greatest potential to aid growth. These are designed to support some of our identified high potential growth sectors – defence & security, agri-tech and energy and advanced manufacturing.

Alternative options considered

10. To adopt the Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Routemap as the GLCCA Innovation Strategy. As the Routemap is now a year old, and was written before the formation of the GLCCA, using this as the basis for the GLCCA strategy rather than using it directly as the strategy, provides the opportunity to update where required, and ensure alignment with emerging GLCCA priorities.
11. To not adopt an Innovation Strategy. Innovation is one area where we know Greater Lincolnshire lags behind other areas, as well being behind the UK averages. This has a detrimental impact on productivity, business competitiveness and business resilience. Increasing levels of innovation across Greater Lincolnshire is therefore a key part of driving growth in Greater Lincolnshire.

Reasons for the recommendation

12. Adopting this strategy provides the framework for developing innovation activity across Greater Lincolnshire. Once the Innovation Panel is in place, the strategy will also provide a structure around which their activities and areas of focus can be planned.
13. There is an ambition to co-develop an Innovation Action Plan with UKRI, and having an adopted Innovation Strategy is a pre-requisite for Action Plan development.

IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Public sector equality duty implications

14. This strategy considers all areas of the Greater Lincolnshire geography, and all business sectors.

Legal implications / comments

15. The adoption of policy and strategy for the Authority is a function reserved to the Authority.

Finance and resource implications / comments

16. It is anticipated that funds to support deployment of the strategy will come from a pot created for this purpose, which will draw from the Investment Fund and other funds that may be received.

Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments

17. This proposed strategy aligns with ambitions within the devolution deal to increase innovation levels, including a commitment from UKRI to explore opportunities for collaboration around innovation.
18. There is an ambition to co-develop an Innovation Action Plan with UKRI, and having an adopted Innovation Strategy is a pre-requisite for Action Plan development.

Consultation and Engagement

19. The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire
- Corporate Leadership Team

Overview and Scrutiny Comments

20. N/A

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendices included with this report

The following documents are included:

- Appendix A – Proposed Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

The following background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

Background Paper	Where it can be viewed
Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Routemap	https://www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk/assets/documents/GLLEP_Innovation_Routemap_2024.pdf
Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal paras 186-189	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greater-lincolnshire-devolution-deal-2023/greater-lincolnshire-devolution-deal#innovation-trade-and-investment

APPENDIX A

The Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy

Version Control		
Version	Date	Changes
0.1	September 2025	Initial draft

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1. Introduction

Innovation is a catalyst for growth, enabling businesses to stay competitive in an ever-evolving global marketplace. The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, published in 2025, places a clear focus on the importance of driving innovation investment, increasing the speed of innovation to market, expanding access to finance, and supporting regional innovation. The Industrial Strategy also identifies eight highest-potential sectors (the "IS-8") on which targeted action will be taken to drive growth. Of these eight, we can link four in particular to the sectors we believe offer the highest innovation potential within Greater Lincolnshire – Advanced Manufacturing (including ag-tech), Clean Energy, Defence and Digital and Technologies.

By fostering innovation, regions can attract investment, create good jobs, and develop solutions to pressing societal challenges. Greater Lincolnshire's businesses have untapped innovative potential, building on local sector specialisms, areas of comparative advantage and expertise. But currently there are too many businesses not innovating, and too few businesses investing strategically in innovation to drive growth. This is primarily a result of structural challenges, cultural barriers, and a lack of the right support for businesses that want to innovate.

In 2024, in preparation for devolution, the Greater Lincolnshire constituent authorities convened an Innovation Commission to provide an evidence base on innovation activity and make recommendations via an Innovation Routemap on how to increase levels of innovation across Greater Lincolnshire. This strategy builds on the work undertaken by the Innovation Commission, utilising the recommendations and evidence within the Innovation Routemap to lay out clear plans for increasing the levels of innovation across Greater Lincolnshire and achieving our ambition to become the rural testbed for innovation nationally.

We want to improve the productivity of our businesses, increase the value of work done in Greater Lincolnshire, and support the prosperity of our local residents. By nurturing and embracing innovation, we will attract more investment, create higher-value jobs, develop solutions to pressing societal and environmental challenges and help our businesses become more efficient, more competitive, more profitable, more resilient and better able to cope with change.

Our aims are to:

- ❖ Create an environment where problem solving and creative thinking thrives, and a culture of innovation permeates businesses of all sizes and sectors. We want to **increase business investment in R&D** in Greater Lincolnshire and **improve productivity in all our businesses, but particularly those within our priority sectors**.
- ❖ Target the opportunities which build on our existing assets and expertise, and where Greater Lincolnshire can deliver world-leading economic activity to support wider prosperity. We want to mobilise around growth opportunities to leverage investment and **increase the number of well-paying innovation-oriented jobs within Greater Lincolnshire**.
- ❖ Convene the right partners and multi-disciplinary teams, to access funding and investment, and build connections across different sectors, innovation assets and supply chains. We want to work with national partners to **increase the share of public innovation spending going to businesses within Greater Lincolnshire**.

2. Executive Summary

The Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Routemap, commissioned by the GLCCA constituent authorities in preparation for devolution, demonstrated how Greater Lincolnshire lags behind other areas on levels of innovation and R&D income. This strategy uses the Routemap as a basis for the innovation objectives and priorities which the GLLCA will pursue to raise the levels of innovation in Greater Lincolnshire businesses. It links strongly to the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy via the high-potential growth sectors of Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, Defence and Digital Technologies.

The strategy is built around two objectives:

Objective One: Supporting all businesses to innovate

Exploring options for business support activities which encourage incremental innovation and adjacent innovation, helping to increase individual business productivity, profitability, competitiveness and resilience focusing on:

- ❖ Creating the structures for success and promoting Greater Lincolnshire's innovation offer;
- ❖ Reviewing and enhancing the portfolio of business advisory, financial and accelerator support services available to local businesses;
- ❖ Creating the spaces for innovation and collaboration.

Objective Two: Accelerating strategic growth opportunities

Directly encouraging disruptive innovation and radical innovation by developing three priority innovation accelerators focused on:

- ❖ **Accelerator 1:** Cross-sector growth opportunities through Big Data and AI;
- ❖ **Accelerator 2:** Innovating at scale towards Food Security;
- ❖ **Accelerator 3:** Advanced Manufacturing supporting energy opportunities.

Our delivery model will be built around five pillars:

- ❖ **Convening**
Bringing together partners across private, public and academic spheres – the “triple helix”.
- ❖ **Targeting**
Utilising evidence to ensure interventions are targeted for maximum benefit and value for money.
- ❖ **Co-design and planning**
Utilising the triple helix to co-design programmes and projects, and their implementation plans.
- ❖ **Resourcing**
Utilising the triple helix to develop resourcing plans and joint funding bids with partners.
- ❖ **Delivery and impact**
Monitoring progress against agreed targets, and measuring outputs and outcomes to ensure benefits realisation.

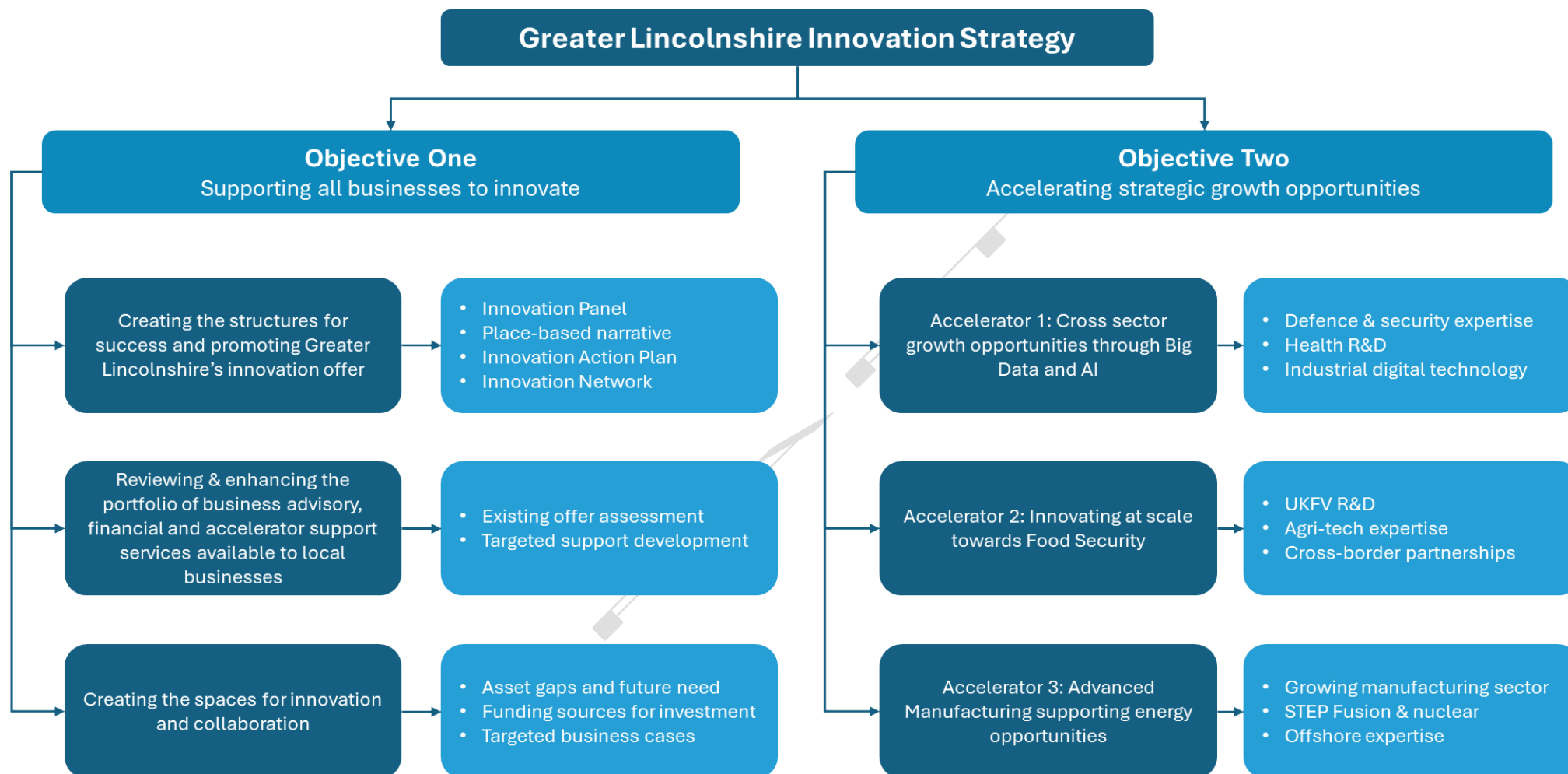


Figure 1: Greater Lincolnshire innovation Strategy overview

3. Setting the Scene

Greater Lincolnshire is a £25.4bn economy with significant potential to increase innovation-led growth. Boasting a mix of manufacturing and engineering industries, a nationally important agri-food sector, a world-leading energy sector, a ports and logistics sector that connects Greater Lincolnshire to national and international markets, and a nationally recognised defence & security cluster, Greater Lincolnshire has the assets for innovation-led growth.

Alongside the University of Lincoln and other innovation-oriented institutions, local partners have invested heavily in R&D capabilities, with the ongoing growth of private sector assets like the Lincoln Science and Innovation Park. Greater Lincolnshire has major opportunities for growth in our high-potential sectors, and is home to many innovative businesses at the forefront of their sectors. Our innovation assets are strong and future-focused.

Like many places across the UK, raising productivity (the average value of work done within a place) remains a priority for Greater Lincolnshire. Increasing the value of economic activity enables more investment in people, places and essential services; and innovation is one of the mechanisms to achieve this. It serves as a catalyst for economic growth, enabling businesses to stay competitive in an ever-evolving global marketplace, and generating wealth and boosting local wages. By fostering innovation, we will be better placed to attract investment, create good jobs, and develop solutions to pressing societal challenges.

There are many possibilities which businesses and academics across the region are already exploring. Businesses in Greater Lincolnshire secured £16m from UKRI in 2020-2021 to progress R&D projects, and the University of Lincoln generated £1.45m in consultancy income in 2022-2023. We have local research specialisms, such as in Computer Science, where 87% of the University of Lincoln's research impact is rated world-leading. There are also hotspots of activity around strategic assets that help bolster the innovative capacity of our region, and five high-potential sectors (agri-tech, defence & security, ports & logistics, energy and advanced manufacturing) that have the potential to transform the long-term trajectory of our economy by providing significant economic impact.

The Innovation Routemap identified opportunities to continue to build sector specialisms, but also highlighted the barriers which currently limit our potential:

Barriers to innovation-led growth	Opportunities for innovation-led growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low levels of business density, connectivity and absorptive capacity, restricting a flow of information, ideas and opportunities between firms and sectors Talent attraction and retention challenges Practical challenges such as finance, information and space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong base of innovation assets and clusters of activity providing a focus for growth and collaboration Established sector strengths with complementary expertise which could create new market opportunities Ambition, and a coalition of local partners keen to raise the profile of innovation and Greater Lincolnshire's nationally significant sectors

Source: Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Routemap, 2024

The Innovation Routemap also highlighted that Greater Lincolnshire lags behind the national picture, and behind the comparator region of Norfolk & Suffolk in many areas:

Indicator	Greater Lincolnshire	Norfolk & Suffolk	UK
R&D expenditure per full time employee	£353	£4,101	£1,638
Innovation jobs (% of total jobs)	1.8%	2.2%	4.4%
Total Innovate UK grants per business (5-year total 2018/19-2022/23)	£1,284	£669	£3,356
% of university students enrolled in STEM subjects	40%	32%	45%
% of university research impact at REF 3*/4*	61%	92%	87%
% of university graduates in full time employment or study	68.4%	69.2%	68.6%
Total IP revenue of universities per £100k of income	£7	£703	£702

Source: Innovate UK (2023), HESA (2021), BRES (2023)

The reasons for this are varied and often interconnected. Some challenges are structural - the dispersed nature of Greater Lincolnshire's business base, and lack of churn and complexity, means there are fewer competitive pressures on businesses to encourage innovation. Levels of business confidence, access to finance and growth space, as well as technical support and know-how for innovation, can also have an impact.

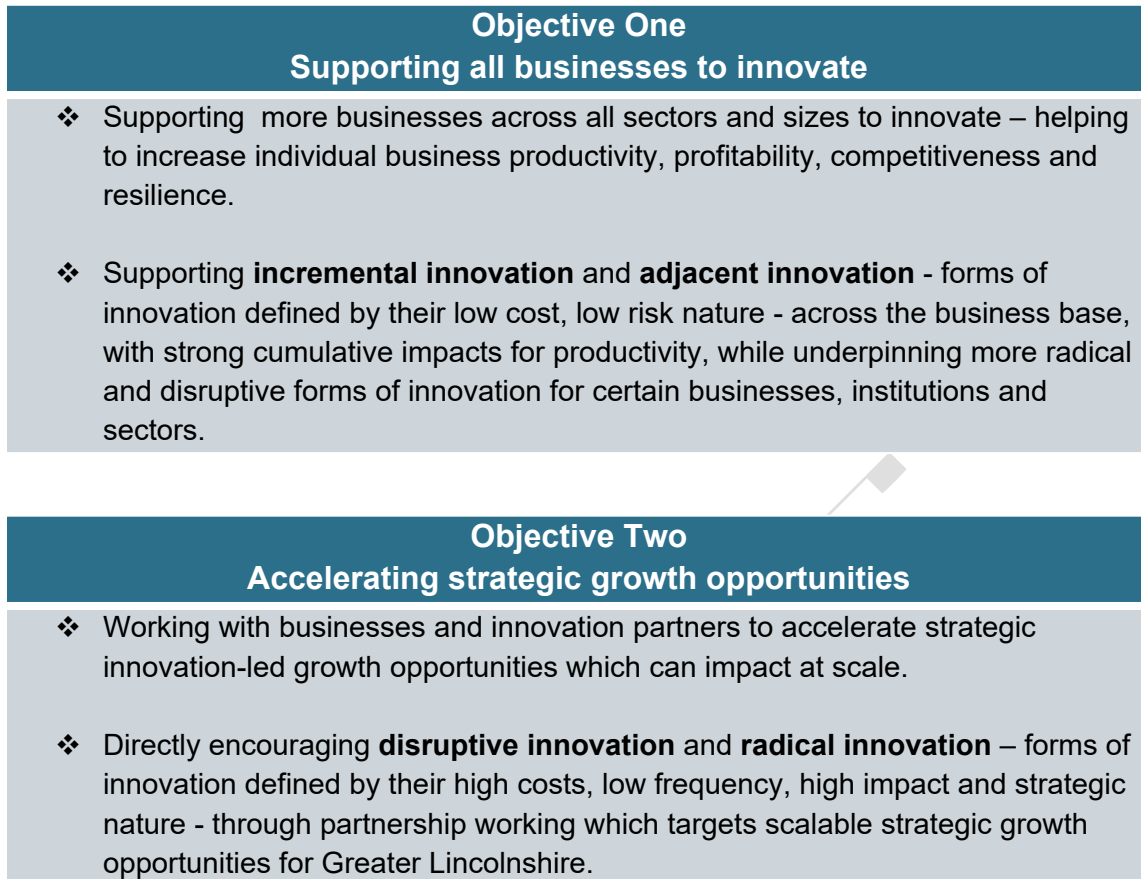
However, these challenges are certainly not unique to Greater Lincolnshire, and regions across the UK have taken different approaches to tackling them. Whilst city regions have been able to capitalise on the density of their innovation and industry assets to accelerate knowledge exchange and commercialisation; some more rural regions have increased clustering around major assets, for example the Norwich Research Park and Martlesham Innovation in Norfolk & Suffolk.

Creating the places where innovation can happen is therefore important. Strengthening clusters which support connectivity within an otherwise dispersed economy and make innovation visible, could help address many of the barriers to innovation. The region's wider investments in infrastructure, business support, trade and inward investment, skills and place will also play a role in creating the wider conditions for growth.

By collaborating around strategic growth opportunities, we can identify where knowledge, expertise and technologies could be applied to create new markets for businesses and entrepreneurs. Accelerating transformational growth opportunities at scale will require us to work differently, facilitated by an effective innovation ecosystem providing the spaces, finance, connections and support that businesses need.

4. Strategic objectives

Within the Innovation Routemap, the Innovation Commission identified two over-arching objectives for increasing innovation across Greater Lincolnshire, and these form the basis of our Innovation Strategy:



This approach is based on building core support for all businesses with growth potential, and targeting expertise on innovation-led strategic growth opportunities, bringing together sector specialisms and enabling technologies to accelerate innovation and bring forward new market opportunities.

Whilst we must continue to support more businesses to engage in linear innovation activity with a customer or knowledge partner, we will accelerate opportunities which have scalable potential or can impact across sectors. These opportunities will require collaboration between partners and multi-disciplinary teams, access to funding and investment, and connections to be built across different sectors, innovation assets and supply chains.

This balanced approach aims to create an environment where research and development can thrive, while also fostering a culture of innovation that permeates businesses of all sizes and sectors. By doing so, we seek to increase the overall innovative capacity of our region, ensuring that more businesses can engage with and benefit from innovative practices and technologies.

4.1. Objective 1: Supporting all businesses to innovate

The strength of the broader innovation ecosystem underpins the growth and success of innovative companies and organisations across the business base, and facilitates the flow of finance, resources and people between innovative companies and actors. We need to create the conditions for success and for businesses to innovate, encouraging inventors, entrepreneurs and tech adopters.

The research carried out by the Innovation Commission highlighted the importance of:

❖ **Profile & Connectivity**

- Creating greater visibility of innovation, and profile-raising of successes on the national and international stage;
- Developing a shared narrative of innovation opportunities in the region;
- Creating opportunities for innovators to connect and collaborate.

❖ **Innovation Spaces**

- Place-making and expansion of innovation sites;
- Creating flagship spaces where companies can grow, and partners can come together to collaborate, share ideas and access support and advice.

❖ **Comprehensive Financial Offer**

- Accessible finance which helps innovators from ideas to commercialisation;
- Funding support which connects businesses to private investors;
- Funding support which facilitates greater strategic co-ordination and proactive targeting of major public funding or investment opportunities.

❖ **Innovation Advisory Support**

- Enabling high-quality innovation advisory support offer for businesses;
- Developing an accelerator which is accessible and builds on the success of previous programmes, but also helps to connect and co-ordinate activity across the innovation ecosystem.

This translates into three strategic areas of activity:

❖ **Creating the structures for success and promoting Greater Lincolnshire's innovation offer**

To include activities such as:

- Establishing an Innovation Panel;
- Developing a place-based narrative that promotes our innovation offer and potential;
- Co-designing an Innovation Action Plan with Innovate UK;
- Exploring the potential of an innovation network.

❖ **Reviewing and enhancing the portfolio of business advisory, financial and accelerator support services available to local businesses**

To include activities such as:

- Reviewing the breadth and effectiveness of the existing support offer;
- Developing targeted innovation support services to address identified gaps.

❖ **Creating the spaces for innovation and collaboration**

To include activities such as:

- Assessing the current provision of innovation assets and identifying gaps and areas of future need;
- Identifying potential funding sources for investment in asset development;
- Working with partners to develop targeted business cases for investment.

4.2. Objective 2: Accelerating Strategic Growth Opportunities

Through consultation with regional partners, the Innovation Commission identified three strategic growth opportunities for development through innovation accelerators:

2. **Accelerator 1:** Cross-sector growth opportunities through Big Data and AI

3. **Accelerator 2:** Innovating at scale towards Food Security

4. **Accelerator 3:** Advanced Manufacturing supporting energy opportunities

Progressing these opportunities will not only strengthen our innovation ecosystem to raise productivity, but will also increase the links between our priority sectors and business base to support business retention and enhance the attractiveness of the region to inward investors. The aim with all three accelerators is to explore ways to reduce barriers to entry for innovative start-ups and spin-outs, create conditions where those businesses can scale up, and unblock barriers for businesses of all sizes to be competitive in national and global markets.

4.2.1. Accelerator 1: Cross-sector growth opportunities in Big Data and AI

The Innovation Routemap identified opportunities to accelerate innovation through an increased use of digitalisation and utilisation of data, generative AI and machine learning. Our existing assets and expertise, particularly in the defence and security sector, can be leveraged and applied to other local sectors such as health, and our wider growth sectors such as manufacturing, creating new market opportunities and supporting the regional customer base.

Digitalisation, remote sensing, robotics and AI are increasingly being used across the agri-food industry, and ag-tech in particular. There are significant opportunities for cross-fertilisation between these sectors which we will continue to explore.

With an ageing population, we also have an opportunity to establish Greater Lincolnshire as a testbed for innovative digital health solutions. Digital and distributed healthcare is still in its early stages of development as a sector. Although it has all the components for innovation-led growth, it needs supporting infrastructure (hard and soft) to bring the sector together and provide a focus for innovation acceleration.

Accelerator 1: Regional assets

- **Nationally significant defence & security assets with expertise in big data and AI**
We have a well-developed and highly innovative defence & security sector, with the region's strategic importance being underscored by the presence of RAF operations. The RAF forms the backbone of a robust supply chain comprising highly innovative defence organisations.

The local ecosystem includes the MOD-recognised [Greater Lincolnshire Regional Defence & Security Cluster](#), and boasts an established consumer base and significant growth potential, creating a fertile ground for innovation.

We are leading ISTAR operations in the UK, with the headquarters at the RAF base in Waddington. The growth of ISTAR operations present opportunities in data collection and management, and require capabilities in data storage, wrangling and visualisation. Our defence businesses around RAF Waddington have strengths in cyber and security, with emerging opportunities in Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), including the manufacturing of swarm UAVs, utilising the strengths the local economy has in 3D printing.

- **Nationally significant expertise in ag-tech and agri-food**
Our UK Food Valley hosts a nationally-significant presence for food processing and manufacturing, and ag-tech, alongside the Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology (LIAT), National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM), and three Food Enterprise Zones, complemented by a strong base of potential private sector partners.
- **Increasing inward investment interest in AI data centres and innovation centres**
The AI and data sector holds significant inward investment potential, with increasing interest in locating such assets in Greater Lincolnshire being shown by investors. This also opens the possibility of developing capital assets such as an AI Innovation Centre, in the development of an AI and data ecosystem.
- **A manufacturing sector with room to benefit from big data and AI**
Manufacturing is another key Greater Lincolnshire sector (the second largest by size) with substantial opportunity to benefit from spillovers in emerging regional big data and AI capabilities. Industrial digital technology can help technology helps manufacturers reduce operating costs, improve quality, productivity, capacity and boost profitability and economic growth; in turn, the growth of big data and AI computing demand will fuel demand for manufactured products and services through the creation of data centres.
- **A strong health sector with R&D potential**
Our health sector is made up of a strong workforce of 60,000 people, with key assets spread across the local geography. This includes a network of local hospitals, National Centre for Rural Health and Care, Mablethorpe Campus for Future Living, and the Lincoln International Institute for Rural Health, based in the Lincoln Medical School. The Institute focuses on health inequalities and the challenges of delivering high-quality care to rural communities.

Accelerator 1: Implementation

This opportunity will have relevance to the **health, defence, digital, agri-food and manufacturing sectors**.

The application of data and AI within the health sector has been identified as a nascent, long term opportunity, requiring early stage activity to build connections and momentum. In developing the implementation plan consideration will need to be given to:

- Working with partners to baseline existing structures, assets, partnerships and connections which can be focused on the data/AI opportunity. Consideration will also be given to the region's manufacturing assets which might play a role in product design and efficiency improvements.
- Proactive engagement with key customers for data/AI and health innovation, including the NHS, to inform targeting of activity and identify potential funding opportunities.
- Capital investments required to enable growth and clustering of data and digital assets, particularly around the University of Lincoln and Lincoln Science Park. In addition to commercial space, this will explore wider capital requirements which may accelerate innovation, including enhancing the region's data storage and processing capabilities.
- Exploration of the long term skills and labour market requirements essential to realise the growth opportunity, including opportunities for student retention and PHD placement programmes to capitalise on local research assets.
- The potential provision of targeted start-up support to attract and retain tech entrepreneurs.

4.2.2. Accelerator 2: Innovating at scale towards food security

The Innovation Routemap highlighted the substantial room for innovation uptake offered by Greater Lincolnshire's well-established agri-food specialism. By leveraging our agricultural assets, we can serve as a commercial testbed for agri-food innovation, and further solidify our position as a leader in this nationally critical sector.

There are distinct opportunities for innovation-led growth within Greater Lincolnshire in accelerating technology adoption to support food security. As food security is one of the 13 Critical National Infrastructures Sectors, our region can play a crucial role in supporting national security by adopting new technologies for year-round farming and building on our strengths in automation and robotics. The food manufacturing sector, in particular, has the potential to accelerate automation by adopting new technologies that enhance the efficiency of food packing and processing, and the possible development of an Grimsby Ocean Cluster supporting innovation in seafood waste valorisation and innovative startups offers the opportunity to further develop and broaden the seafood sector.

Accelerator 2: Regional Assets

- **Recognition as the UK Food Valley and nationally recognised R&D assets**
The agri-food sector is one of high growth potential sectors, presenting a distinct economic opportunity through the UK Food Valley. Built on our historic strengths in agriculture, seafood and food processing, the area boasts strategic assets such as the Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology (LIAT), National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM), and three Food Enterprise Zones, complemented by a strong base of potential private sector partners.
- **Nationally significant cluster and agri-tech capabilities**
Greater Lincolnshire is home to Europe's largest Agri-food Tech automation and robotics cluster, attracting businesses that invest heavily in automation. Greater Lincolnshire also hosts expertise in remote sensing, and data analytics and wrangling through the Greater Lincolnshire Regional Defence & Security Cluster, and cross overs between this sector and ag-tech also present significant opportunities.

- **Cross-border partnership with neighbouring agricultural hubs**

Led by the University of Lincoln, with the backing of a £4.9m grant award from the EPSRC the Greater Lincolnshire and North Cambridgeshire (LINCAM) region agricultural technologies (agri-tech) cluster project aims to make the LINCAM region an agri-tech gateway for the world. This will enable the development of technologies at commercial scale and provide export opportunities for agri-tech companies and inward investment opportunities within both the agri-tech and primary production sectors.

The recent £2.5m Innovate UK Launchpad programme, delivered in partnership across Greater Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk supported SMEs with grant funding for R&D and innovation projects focused on agri-tech and food technology.

Accelerator 2: Implementation

This opportunity will have relevance to the **agri-tech, digital and manufacturing sectors**.

Adoption of technology and circular economy innovation principles to support food security has been identified by partners as immediate opportunities which can build on existing activity and assets in the agriculture, digital technology, and food manufacturing and processing sectors. Working with established assets such as the LIAT and GL Manufacturing Board, there will be an opportunity to quickly convene partners around specific interventions and investment propositions. In developing the implementation plan consideration will be given to:

- Targeted support to help businesses and researchers connect and access funding (e.g. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and Innovate UK grants) in order to accelerate business-led innovation projects which support food security
- Engagement with key customers to understand challenges in tech and circular economy adoption and how these could be overcome
- Facilitation of tech challenges which convene partners to tackle common issues and design innovative solutions
- Identifying sources of financial support to de-risk investment
- The role of pilot projects and promotional activities to demonstrate technology effectiveness
- Opportunities to promote Greater Lincolnshire as a demonstrator or living lab able to support business and academic partners with product development and the commercialisation of research, and to attract international investors looking to deploy technologies at scale in new markets.

4.2.3. Accelerator 3: Advanced Manufacturing supporting energy opportunities

Manufacturing is an essential sector within the Greater Lincolnshire economy, as the largest sector by GVA and a major provider of high value, tradeable exports (which have an outside effect on local productivity). The energy market has played a major role in shaping the local manufacturing sector, with key local employers and specialisms in carbon intensive and energy sector-oriented production.

Greater Lincolnshire is now well-placed to take advantage of the exciting opportunities associated with new and emerging energy technologies, including the STEP Fusion site at West Burton,

nuclear technologies such as Small and Advanced Modular Reactors, and the development of hydrogen, offshore wind and carbon capture technologies in the Humber. Manufacturers will need to innovate to respond to these changing customer needs. This offers an opportunity to drive uptake of innovative, advanced manufacturing techniques through customer-oriented innovation, industrial digitalisation, energy efficiency and the development of novel materials.

Accelerator 3: Regional Assets

- **A regionally important manufacturing sector with the capacity to serve new energy markets**
Greater Lincolnshire's manufacturing sector is particularly resilient when compared to its neighbours and indeed the rest of the UK. The number of manufacturer businesses in Greater Lincolnshire has risen by more than 1.7% compared to declines in Leicestershire (-7.5%), D2N2 (-3.5%) and the rest of UK (-1.1%) over the last 5 years. The sector has grown by 64% in real terms (when adjusted for inflation) over the past decade in Greater Lincolnshire, while nationally (England) the sector grew by 29% in real terms over the past decade.
- **Cross -Humber industrial partnerships**
Strong connections and partnership working cross-Humber between the north and south banks already exists, including the Humber Freeport, the Freeport Innovation Liaison Group, the Humber Energy Board and the regional universities can be built upon to enhance the regional offer.
- **Established strengths in offshore renewables which provide important markets for regional manufacturing expertise**
The South Humber bank serves as a focal point for energy innovation, particularly in offshore wind and hydrogen, hosting major innovation hubs including the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult and the newly designated Humber Freeport.
- **Emerging markets for regional manufacturers in new energy technologies**
Our Local Growth Plan will capture the enormous potential of supply chain opportunities associated with emerging energy technologies including STEP fusion, SMR and AMR nuclear, and industrial decarbonisation.

Accelerator 3: Implementation

This opportunity will have relevance to the **manufacturing** and **energy** sectors.

Supporting the manufacturing sector to leverage opportunities in emerging energy technologies has been identified by partners as an immediate opportunity which can build on existing activity and assets in the manufacturing and energy sectors. In developing the implementation plan consideration will be given to:

- Engagement with major customers in the energy sector to understand specific innovation challenges with implications and opportunities for the regional manufacturing supply chain, and explore how these could be taken forward
- Facilitation of tech challenges which convene partners from across Greater Lincolnshire and our neighbouring areas, to tackle common issues and design innovative solutions
- Identifying appropriate support to progress targeted business to business innovation projects
- Identifying sources of financial support to de-risk investment

- Developing targeted support to help manufacturing businesses, energy sector businesses and researchers connect and access funding in order to accelerate business-led innovation projects.
- Capital investments required to support growth and co-location of manufacturing, energy and research partners, particularly where this strengthens existing assets

5. Delivery model

The model for regional innovation accelerators builds on established approaches such as UKRI's Innovation Accelerator Programme and EPSRC's Place-Based Impact Accelerator Accounts. Whilst the focus of regional accelerators may shift over time as new opportunities emerge, they represent long term commitments to focus our innovation efforts, and demonstrate intentionality to raise business confidence and attract investment.

Our Innovation Strategy delivery will utilise the following model:

- ❖ **Convening**
Establishing a forum to bring together partners across private, public and academic spheres – the “triple helix” approach.
- ❖ **Targeting**
Utilising existing and new evidence to identify each programme or project focus, ensuring interventions are targeted where the maximum benefit and value for money will be realised.
- ❖ **Co-design and planning**
Utilising the triple helix approach with partners to co-design programmes and projects, and their implementation plans.
- ❖ **Resourcing**
Utilising the triple helix approach to develop resourcing plans and joint funding bids with partners.
- ❖ **Delivery and impact**
Monitoring progress against agreed delivery targets, and measuring outputs and outcomes to ensure benefits realisation and demonstrate improvements.

6. Programme Development

Where programmes and/or projects are planned, business cases will be developed and submitted into the GLCCA pipeline approval process, as per the GLCCA Assurance Framework. This will allow decisions to be made on whether programmes and projects are to be funded directly by the GLCCA, or whether external funding needs to be sought. This will also ensure that a pipeline of innovation projects will be available as and when external funding opportunities become available.

Programmes will be developed with the triple helix approach in mind, aiming to leverage both public and private sector funding to gain maximum benefit.

7. Governance structure

This strategy is approved by the GLCCA Business & Infrastructure Board and forms part of the Strategic Framework of the GLCCA. This strategy will align with other strategies developed by the GLCCA, including the Local Growth Plan and the Spatial Development Strategy.

An Innovation Panel will be convened by the Business & Infrastructure Board. The Panel will meet once per quarter and will report directly to the Business & Infrastructure Board. The Panel will consist of public sector, private sector and academic sector representatives, in order to achieve the triple helix approach to planning and delivery.

The Panel will make recommendations to the Business & Infrastructure Board. Decision-making and expenditure authorisation will sit with the Business & Infrastructure Board.

8. Measuring Success

Reporting against delivery targets will be provided to the Business & Infrastructure Board in the first instance, as part of the routine reporting structure.

Performance metrics will be agreed at programme and/or project level as appropriate. Where relevant, this will also feed into the overall performance reporting process of the GLCCA.

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Business and Infrastructure Board	
Date of meeting:	1 October 2025
Report title:	Preparing a Greater Lincolnshire Spatial Development Strategy – Draft Document
Report of:	Lee Sirdifield, Chief Operating Officer, GLCCA lee.sirdifield@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk
Classification:	This report is open
Contact officer:	Ruth Carver, Deputy Director, GLCCA ruth.carver@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk 07787 508000
Purpose of the report:	Update the members of the Business and Infrastructure Board on the potential duty of CCA's to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy and seek approval for the commencement of preparatory activity.
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor. There are no consent requirements for this decision.
Report has been considered by:	CLT 16 September 2025

Recommendation(s):

That the Business and Infrastructure Board:

- 1)** Notes the duty to produce a Spatial Development Strategy (should the Planning and Infrastructure Bill become law later in the year)
- 2)** Approves the commencement of preparatory activity in conjunction with the areas Local Planning Authorities to enable the future development of a Spatial Development Strategy; and
- 3)** Agrees to accept and implement any funds that may become available from the Government to support the Strategy development.

REPORT CONTENT

Summary of the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) Requirements

Background

1. Currently, the only area with a formally adopted SDS is London. It is not anticipated that areas will have to produce a document to this scale. The SDS presents an opportunity, through the requirement for formal consultation, to agree and articulate the vision for growth – it will be the spatial representation of the Local Growth Plan and any other mayoral aspirations with spatial development needs. We have the potential to develop the SDS as a ‘Strategic Investment Framework’ which could ensure that Greater Lincolnshire has a flexible, creative approach to growth which supports investment and development and highlights key clusters and corridors.
2. Therefore, the SDS for Greater Lincolnshire should be considered a high-level strategic document important to recognise that the SDS will be part of the statutory development plan for the area. It means that it will sit alongside local plans and neighbourhood plans and there is real potential here to co-create a plan which brings key strategic components of growth together across our place.
3. The role of the GLCCA will be defined as a ‘Strategic Planning Authority’ (once Bill is approved) and it will need to establish a ‘Strategic Planning Board’.
4. Broadly, it should include the following sections:
 - Overall spatial strategy
 - Broad locations for development
 - Regeneration areas
 - Areas to be protected and enhanced (linked to Local Nature Recovery Strategies)
 - Infrastructure needs
 - Identify areas for housing growth and how this can be delivered at scale, with stakeholders
 - Build on local priorities – alignment of strengths and opportunities within Local Growth Plans (SDS gives this its spatial focus and locks them into statutory planning).
 - The SDS should not be site specific like Local Plans.
5. As part of the SDS development, there will be certain formal requirements that must be met, including:
 - A requirement to undertake one formal consultation. Further non-statutory engagement can be undertaken.
 - There will also be Planning Inspector Examinations on SDS.
 - Local adoption of the SDS should include formal approval from CA members.
6. Once established, much like current local plan-making, the authority must prepare a timetable to prepare its SDS, prepare and consult on a draft SDS, submit this for examination, undertake any necessary main modifications, send

to the SoS and then adopt the SDS. There will be requirement to review it from 'time to time', but as yet no indication of what this means.

7. Similarly to current plan-making, there is scope for the SoS to intervene at virtually all stages to direct an authority to prepare an SDS (or indeed, to stop any work on the SDS), make modifications, to adopt the SDS, alter the SDS after adoption and to review the SDS.
8. The SDS should address matters of 'strategic importance', including infrastructure and housing (this may include the type, quantum and/or distribution, including identifying general areas that are suitable for development) but should not make specific allocations. Like local plans, SDSs should have regard to their effects on sustainability, environment and health.
9. The SDS will need to establish robust evidence base and bring collaboratively together different local plans, and evidence bases at a sub-regional spatial scale.

Indicative Timeline

10. Timelines for the Spatial Development Strategy are dependent on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill. There will not be legislative timelines for Combined Authorities to complete the production of an SDS, but there will likely be policy and ministerial statements that set out OFFICIAL expectations on timelines.
11. Officers are seeking approval from GLCCA to begin preparations and planning for SDS responsibilities. Although this is not yet in formal legislation, it is likely that requirement will be approved, so officers would like to ensure that the CA is best positioned to deliver the SDS. This would involve engagement with the local authorities in the area to establish how to work together, and to develop an indicative resourcing and implementation plan together and identify key tasks.

Support from MHCLG

12. It is anticipated, but not yet confirmed, that some funding support may become available from MHCLG to support the preparation process for SDSs. If so, this will likely be confirmed in the forth coming budget.
13. If funding support is announced, officers are seeking approval from the Combined Authority to access this funding, whether that is a direct award or via a "bidding" process. Please note, there is no guarantee or confirmation that funding support will be available, but this approval is being sought to ensure that the CA is best primed if the opportunity does arise.

Alternative Options Considered

14. Not applicable – will be a national government requirement to produce a spatial development strategy for Greater Lincolnshire.

Reasons for the recommendation

15. Although the legislation is not yet in place for the duty on the Combined Authority to produce a Spatial Development Strategy, it would be important that work is started to plan and establish the resources and capacity to support this work now. Approval is therefore sought to begin planning and potentially attract further funding into the CA that will ensure the area is best primed to produce a Spatial Development Strategy once the legislation is passed.

IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Public sector equality duty implications

16. The implications are set out in detail in the body of the report. They will be considered throughout the evolution of the strategy.

Legal implications / comments

17. There are no direct legal implications at this stage, as the SDS is not yet a formal, legislative requirement of the GLCCA.
18. A Spatial Development Strategy will identify key spatial growth areas, which may impact residents differently. However, at this stage, no individual locations have been identified, and this is not part of the approval within this paper.

Finance and resource implications / comments

19. Approval to begin preparations for the SDS does not have a direct financial implication. However, the planning process will identify resource needs, both skills, knowledge and capacity, to produce the SDS, which may lead to a cost for the CA.
20. In other areas, there are typically 4-6 people working on the SDS, although not all of these are full time, and some are secondments and through collaboration with the constituent authorities. Once the requirements have been fully mapped, the various options for resourcing will need to be considered.
21. Approval to seek funding support from MHCLG to deliver the SDS does not have a direct financial implication, as funding has not yet been announced. But if money is announced, attracting this to the CA could help reduce potential resourcing impacts.
22. We will need to establish a robust evidence base, like we have with the Housing Pipeline, to bring together different local plans and evidence bases at a sub-regional spatial scale. This is quite a task but one that can and should be done collaboratively.

Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments

23. The implications are set out in detail in the body of the report.

Consultation and Engagement

24. The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Constituent and non-constituent authorities via an initial housing and SDS workshop discussion 10th September
- CLT 16th September

Overview and Scrutiny Comments

25. Not applicable at this draft stage.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendices included with this report

There are no appendices included.

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Business and Infrastructure Board	
Date of meeting:	1 October 2025
Report title:	GLCCA Emerging Housing Strategy Preparations for Strategic Place Partnership
Report of:	Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer
Classification:	This report is open
Contact officer:	Carolina Borgstrom, Director Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, North East Lincolnshire Council on behalf of GLCCA Halina Davies, Strategic Lead Infrastructure and Economic Vision Halina.davies@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk ,
Purpose of the report:	This report is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back on the Housing Pipeline work and future delivery plans • Seek approval to commence sifting of pipeline sites in line with agreed objectives and investment principles
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor. There are no consent requirements for this decision.
Report has been considered by:	CLT 3 September 2025, and the Business and Infrastructure Officers and Housing Groups.
Recommendation: That the Business and Infrastructure Board: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Notes the progress and main headlines from the Greater Lincolnshire Housing Pipeline 2) Approves the proposed spend for awarded Homes England capacity funding, and 3) Supports the proposed vision, objectives and investment principles which will inform the sifting process. 	

REPORT CONTENT

Information

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Greater Lincolnshire Vision 2050 and Devolution Prospectus set out Greater Lincolnshire's aspiration to unlock housing including:
 - a. Investing in high quality homes, locations and services to retain a younger workforce and support those in later life.
 - b. Investment from Homes England to bring forward the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of local communities.
 - c. Supporting regeneration of areas, providing sustainable and affordable housing solutions for our future workforce.
- 1.2 The housing aspirations in the Greater Lincolnshire devolution deal were based on the priorities set out in collaboration through the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Framework 2023. The devolution deal does not replace or duplicate the important role of Greater Lincolnshire Housing and Planning Authorities. Instead, it provides a new and additional route for funding through a Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) with Homes England, to unlock key strategic housing sites, which can contribute to ambitions for economic growth. The creation of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) also provides a platform for increased collaboration between Local Authorities in shared priority areas.
- 1.3 To achieve Homes England SPP status, GLCCA needs to reach a number of milestones. An early priority would be for GLCCA to develop their strategy to reach the housing aspirations set out in the prospectus and devolution deal text, based on a housing pipeline and evidence base. There is an expectation from Homes England that any CCA Place Partnerships will be focused on housing sites with potential to unlock economic growth, employment and/or strategic brownfield sites.
- 1.4 Homes England will continue their work with individual Local Authorities around wider local needs and priorities, parallel to the partnerships they hold with GLCCA.
- 1.5 The GLCCA is currently developing its Corporate Plan with the key priorities of Bolder Ambitions, Better Connections and Brighter Futures. The Authority is further working with government to develop a Growth Plan for Greater Lincolnshire. Ensuring we grow the housing sector to provide homes that cater for the needs of all our population including retaining a younger and growing workforce and supporting those in later life, will be key to deliver the GLCCA's priorities.
- 1.6 Whilst the overall vision and ambition of GLCCA's will be shaped by the Corporate Plan and Growth Plan, it is essential that the Authority sets out its housing vision, strategic objectives, delivery model and investment principles, to provide a foundation for the Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England.

2. Update on housing readiness work and stakeholder engagement

- 2.1 In March 2024, the Devolution Board supported the formation of a task and finish group to progress a range of readiness tasks on behalf of the emerging GLCCA, closely aligned with the approved prospectus commitments. This has including utilising the government capacity funding to develop a regional evidence base to underpin a future Housing Strategy.
- 2.2 The work has been collaborative with representation from both constituent and non-constituent authorities as well as Homes England. The Commission has been informed by local plan and other data held by all participating Local Authorities, as well as national data sets.
- 2.3 The progress to date has delivered the first comprehensive regional evidence base on housing for Greater Lincolnshire, which places GLCCA in an excellent position to set out its Housing Strategy and meet the Homes England readiness criteria for a Strategic Place Partnership within the first year of operation. The document is now in final format and includes a joint housing pipeline containing around 500 regionally strategic housing sites.
- 2.4 The mapping and housing pipeline database highlights where concentrations of available housing sites intersect with constraints, major employment areas and transport hubs and corridors and sets a foundation to allow creation of a prioritised pipeline to open the door to devolved funding through the Homes England Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) arrangements.
- 2.5 The housing pipeline highlights that the housing mix in Greater Lincolnshire differs in some areas to the rest of the East Midlands and England average, with needs highlighted in affordable rent, supported housing and provision of smaller high-quality units both to serve the older and young professional demographic.
- 2.6 GLCCA, in partnership with Local Authorities, will have an important role in ensuring future housing growth not just delivering the right number of homes to achieve Local Plan targets, but instead the right mix of housing and affordability ratio to support our residents and our economic growth aspirations.
- 2.7 GLCCA has been successful in securing further capacity funding from Homes England, to allow external support to complete sifting, prioritisation of the Housing pipeline sites. This will initially identify around 20-30 strategic but stalled sites, with a focus on delivering on the SPP partnership and wider CCA work. Sites would be split into immediately deliverable if unblocked (around 10 sites) and a longer list to guide medium-term delivery. The funding will also allow some further feasibility and due diligence task to better understand barriers and routes to delivery for key sites.
- 2.8 Procurement of independent consultancy is complete and if contract is awarded this would support to the GLCCA to commence site sifting in partnership with the 10 Local Authorities.
- 2.9 The GLCCA recognise their priority site pipeline needs to be a dynamic document which can respond to new emerging priorities and job growth areas

when required. It is anticipated that any final site list will be reviewed at least annually.

3. Proposed Housing vision for GLCCA

- 3.1 GLCCA does not wish to duplicate the role of the local housing and planning Authorities, who are best placed to deliver to local housing needs. However, as set out in the Devolution Prospectus and Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Framework, there are clear regional benefits from a higher-level strategic housing framework, to accelerate housing delivery to support the economic growth of our region.
- 3.2 GLCCA wishes to shape their role in this space by collaborating with Government, Homes England, local authorities, developers, and housing providers to create well-designed, energy-efficient, and affordable homes that support thriving communities and meet the needs of residents now and in the future. By making the best use of our assets, including regenerating redundant land and buildings, we will help unlock new opportunities for growth while preserving the character of our city, towns, villages and places.
- 3.3 To reflect the previously agreed position in the Greater Lincolnshire Vision and Prospectus, it is proposed that GLCCA shape their continuing work based on the following key objectives until a formal Housing Strategy is adopted:
 - a) **Investing in High-Quality Homes:** Ensure our homes cater for the need of all of our population including retaining a younger and growing workforce and supporting those in later in life, by providing high-quality housing options.
 - b) **Shaping Housing Policies in partnership with Local Authorities:** Support those in greatest need, including veterans and vulnerable groups, to ensure everyone has access to a stable, affordable home.
 - c) **Infrastructure Development:** Bring forward the necessary infrastructure to meet the housing needs of our local communities, both rural and urban.
 - d) **Regeneration and Diversification:** Support the regeneration, economic growth and diversification of our city, towns and village centres to provide vibrant, sustainable high streets, champion our places and better utilization of empty or underused brownfield land.
- 3.4 The GLCCA recognises that achieving these objectives will require work across a range of workstreams and wider partnerships. Our proposed ways of working include:
 - a) Acting as a collaborator between Lincolnshire's Housing and Planning Authorities to encourage and support joint work in areas where this will bring benefits including affordable housing provisions, veteran housing and joint site marketing. Our latest stakeholder workshop with 10 Local Authorities was held on 10th September 2025, with commitment from all participants to continue regular meetings.
 - b) Establishing a Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England with the aspiration of bringing in more funding to unlock a number of strategic key housing sites as well as brownfield sites, to enable the GLCCA's Strategic Economic and Growth Plans.

- c) Improve the skills and business support offer across Greater Lincolnshire to increase resilience, skills and supply in our housing building and construction sector.

Greater Lincolnshire GLCCA will deliver these objectives by:

- a. Acting as a collaborator between Lincolnshire's Housing and Planning Authorities to encourage and support joint work in areas where this will bring benefits including affordable housing provisions, veteran housing and joint site marketing.
- b. Establishing a Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England with the aspiration of bringing in more funding to unlock a number of strategic key housing sites as well as brownfield sites, to enable the GLCCA's Strategic Economic and Growth Plans.
- c. Improve the skills and business support offer across Greater Lincolnshire to increase resilience, skills and supply in our housing building and construction sector.

4. Housing Investment Strategic Principles for Strategic Place Partnership

- 4.1 In collaboration with Homes England, Greater Lincolnshire CCA proposes to target any housing funding secured, to unlock stalled sites, based on their alignment with the principles set out in our Corporate and Growth Plans. The inherent risks and overall deliverability of each scheme will also be evaluated. Such investment will be designed to complement, not duplicate, existing Local Authority led funding routes and arrangements with Homes England.
- 4.2 When prioritising sites for future GLCCA led grant funding opportunities it is proposed that the Authority will adhere to the following investment principles:
 - a) **Deliverability:** Any funding allocated must demonstrate there is a plan, capacity, and expertise to deliver the proposed scheme on time.
 - b) **Support Housing Growth in Key Employment Areas:** Priority will be given to schemes that promote housing growth in key employment growth areas.
 - c) **Encourage Co-Funding:** The GLCCA encourages co-funding of schemes where opportunities exist and will prioritise schemes where GLCCA contributions enable wider transformation and/or address gaps in affordable housing supply.
 - d) **Alignment with Investment Funds:** Encourage alignment with the ambitions of other relevant investment funds where these align to employment and economic growth ambitions, such as the Mayoral Investment Fund, Town Deals, Future High Street Fund, LUF and other local transformational funding guided by Master Plans or Plans for Neighbourhoods.
 - e) **Job Opportunities in Growth Sectors:** Promote job opportunities within existing and emerging growth sectors, including Advanced Manufacturing, AI, energy, food, and defence.

- f) **Create Connections:** Enhance connections between town centres and employment opportunities, linking key public spaces within established population centres and activating empty or underused brownfield land.
- g) **High-Quality Living:** Promote high-quality neighbourhoods with a mix of housing types and tenures to support integrated communities and champion our place.
- h) **Maximize Accessibility to Public Transport:** Focus on creating a more connected place through improved public transport accessibility.
- i) **Address Market Failure:** Any funded project is required to demonstrate it will bring forward sites that the housing market would not otherwise develop.

6. Estimated Timescales

6.1 The estimated timescales are as follows:

- Commence Sifting of Housing Pipeline- October 2025
- Gain further clarity on SDS and possible funding- December 2025
- Complete sifting and seek approval for short term priority sites- March 2026
- Commence discussions around MoU with of Homes England's for SPP process - Spring 2026.
- Achieve a signed SPP with Homes England- Summer 2026.

7. Alternative options considered

7.1 The alternative option would be to do nothing to establish a housing pipeline, and progress an SPP. However, this would have unacceptable impacts on local economic growth, regeneration and achievement of the government's local housing targets. It would also not comply with expected future duties of the GLCCA as a Spatial Planning Authority.

8. Reasons for the recommendation

8.1 Accelerating housing delivery to support economic growth is a priority for GLCCA to meet its aspiration. The readiness work has provided GLCCA with early maturity in this space and increased the opportunity of accessing further devolved housing viability funding, as well as meeting the readiness criteria for entering into a Strategic Place Partnership with Home England. The recommendations set out in this report, ensures that progress towards this ambition is continues at pace.

9. IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

9.1 The implications are set out in detail in the body of the report.

Public sector equality duty implications

9.2 All data used to produce the Housing Pipeline has been based on Local Authority Housing Needs Assessments, Local Plan Data and government statistics, all collected and presented in a way that ensure the needs of all of our residents and groups are duly considered.

Legal implications / comments

- 9.3 Legal advice will be required in the future once the MOU has been drafted with Homes England for the SPP.

Finance and resource implications / comments

- 9.4 Dedicated GLCCA resources will be required to deliver housing programme activity, and a Strategic Housing Officer has been appointed to lead on the Housing strategy work and the SPP. Any further external consultancy support provided to complete tasks set out in this report will be funded by capacity grant awarded by Homes England.

Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments

- 9.5 The Planning and Infrastructure Bill and the Government's 10-year infrastructure Strategy announced as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review will help inform local housing planning and delivery, and the development of any bespoke housing programmes led by the GLCCA.

Consultation, Boards, Overview and Scrutiny / comments

- 9.6 The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:
- Business and Infrastructure Advisory Group 1st September
 - All 10 Local Authorities through regular stakeholder workshops as well as data sign off for regional Housing Pipeline.
 - Homes England East Midlands Region

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendices included with this report

Not applicable

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

The following background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

Background Paper	Where it can be viewed
Devolution Deal	Published online
Greater Lincolnshire Housing Pipeline Report	Held by GLCCA with copy provided to all contributing Local Authorities.

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