

# Draft Wyre Borough Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy

## Appendix B: Background and Context

### B1. National and Regional Context

**2035 Industrial Strategy:** the emerging government strategy, due to be launched spring 2025, sets out a 10-year roadmap based on goals including driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and enhancing global competitiveness.

**Lancashire Devolution Agreement:** the Government has been elected on a manifesto to widen and deepen devolution across the country, delivering growth in all regions. The establishment of the Lancashire Combined County Authority aims to provide local leaders the power to make decisions that benefit their communities, boosting economic growth and driving reform. Our Strategy has been developed with a view to working on proposals to address local priorities, including innovation led growth and net zero ambitions which may inform the emerging Local Growth Plan.

**Lancashire 2050:** the framework was published in November 2022 and is designed to ensure all 15 councils are aligned on key county-wide issues based around eight key themes of: economic prosperity, transport and infrastructure; environment and climate; housing; early years and education; employment and skills; health and wellbeing; and communities and place.

Other regional strategies and information available from Lancashire County with implications for this Strategy include:

Lancashire Independent Economic Review – Final Report

Lancashire County Council – Economic Strategy 2023-25

Lancashire County Council – Environment Strategy 2023-25

Lancashire County Council – Highways and Transport Strategy 2023-25

Fylde Coast Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Remade: A Cultural Investment Strategy for Lancashire

Lancashire Tourism Growth Strategy: “building better demand”

Wyre borough local authority profile

Blackpool Cultural Strategy 2024-2030

Visit England a strategic framework for tourism 2010-2020

Visit Britain “starring Great Britain” filming campaign

## **B2. Local Context**

The Strategy has been developed in alignment with policies and plans which include:

**Council Plan 2024-2028** with a vision, priorities and commitments that are reviewed annually as part of a 'big issues' assessment which takes into account national and local policy, data and organisational considerations.

**The Wyre Local Plan** and recommendations contained within this for employment land, housing and growth.

The emerging **Asset Management Plan** and investment in our key assets, including theatres, markets and leisure facilities.

**Climate Change Strategy 2024-2035** and action plans to support the green agenda.

**Local Insight Data – Wyre Summary Report** up-to-date information about the borough and our communities.

**Town Centre Regeneration Frameworks** for each town centre in Wyre which set out strategic objectives and projects to achieve an agreed future vision for their respective town centres.

**Fleetwood Market marketing plan**

**Marine Hall marketing plan**

To better understand the 'big issues' identified a review of topical information was undertaken, these documents are listed below:

**Business support:** 'NOMIS', the official census and labour market statistics provided by the Office for National Statistics; Profile of businesses in Wyre, LGA Research from Local Government Association; Local Economy of the Future, British Chamber of Commerce; State of Industry Report Q1 2024, Food & Drink Federation; Food and Beverage 2024 Trends and Outlook for the UK and Ireland, Aptean; Manufacturing: State of the industry, the potential for growth, Make UK; Regional Manufacturing Outlook 2024, Make UK; 2024 Retail trends, Board International; The State of Growth in Lancashire, Spring 2024, Growth Flag; Small Business Index, Quarter 1, 2024, Federation of Small Businesses.

**Rural Economic Development:** Evaluation Report of the Rural Recovery Fund, Lancashire County Council; The Growth Belt: Supporting Rural Small Business, Federation of Small Businesses; Rural Economy Toolkit, Institute of Economic Development and Rural Services Network; Final Evaluation and Impact Assessment for the Lancashire LEADER Programme, Lancashire County Council; Delivering for rural England – the second report on rural proofing, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

**Green Economic Development:** Local green jobs – accelerating a sustainable economic recovery in Wyre, LGA Research from Local Government Association.

**Town Centres:** The Future of the High Street, Federation of Small Businesses; The Portas Review, Mary Portas; Dealing with empty shops, Local Government Association; Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal', Local Government Association; High Street: How our town centres can bounce back from the retail crisis, David Rudlin.

**Employment Sites & Premises:** Fylde Coast Economic Needs Update & Employment Land Review.

**Education, Employment and Training:** Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2024-2029, Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub; Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan, North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce; Work Ready Lancashire Booklet, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub; Young Enterprise Manifesto 2024, Young Enterprise; Economic Inactivity: Insight Report, Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub.

**Visitor Economy:** draft Fylde Coast Employment Land Review, Deloitte's: The economic Contribution of the visitor economy: UK and the Nations, Great Britain Tourism Survey and GB Day Visits Survey, Overnight campervan parking UK database, places to stay visit lancashire.

### **STEAM report for Lancashire 2022**

#### **B3. Key data**

There are approximately 113,000 people living in Wyre, that's roughly 400 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The largest population age groups are the over 80s and the 55-59s.

Wyre has seen the North West's joint third-largest percentage-point fall (alongside West Lancashire and Oldham) in the proportion of people aged 16 years and over (excluding full-time students) who were employed (from 51.9% in 2011 to 49.3% in 2021). In Wyre, those who are economically inactive has increased in recent years. Coinciding with the ageing population, there has been an increase to the percentage of those who have retired, with an increase of 1.2% since 2011 – this remaining significantly higher when compared regionally and nationally.

There are four main towns in Wyre, with substantial town centres providing a range of retail and other services and facilities - Fleetwood, Cleveleys and Poulton-le-Fylde located within the urban peninsula and Garstang located in the eastern part of the borough on the A6. In recent years, there has been fluctuating vacancy rates across all four town centres, however the general trend is that of the main four town centres, only Fleetwood regularly see a vacancy rate above the North-West average.

Wyre's economy consists mainly of micro/small businesses that demand smaller units (of the 4000+ businesses registered in the borough, 90% are made up of 0-9 employees). With the exception of Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone, we know that our existing employment areas are typically well occupied with limited opportunity for further expansion

At the time of the 2021 Census, Wyre was a net exporter of labour. As recorded in the 2021 Census, of the circa 47,000 Wyre residents in employment, over 21,000 regularly travelled outside of the borough to work elsewhere, mostly to the neighbouring authorities of Blackpool, Fylde, Preston and Lancaster. At the same time, approximately 10,000 residents of other boroughs commute into Wyre to work, again predominantly from adjoining local authorities.

Further, whilst the median weekly salary has increased standing at £479 compared to £463 in 2021, this is still lower than both the Lancashire (£487) and England average (£537).

The annual tourism economic impact research undertaken for Marketing Lancashire, for the calendar years 2011 to 2022, finds that in 2022 Wyre had 4.40

million visitors which supported an economic impact in Wyre of £395m and the full time employment of 3,898 jobs.

# Appendix C: Big Issues

## **C1. Economic Development 'Big Issues'**

The following list were explored when developing the Strategy:

1. Small businesses.
2. Medium–large businesses.
3. Key industry sectors.
4. Town Centres.
5. Education, employment and training.
6. Rural businesses.
7. Partnerships to deliver economic growth.
8. Business premises and employment land.
9. Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone.
10. Climate Change.

## **C2. Visitor Economy 'Big Issues'**

The following list were explored when developing the Strategy:

1. Overnight trips and day visits.
2. Coach tours.
3. Council owned and managed tourist attractions.
4. Heritage and cultural aspects of the borough.
5. Place-based marketing.
6. Cultural offer.
7. Local transport.
8. Trend towards wellbeing and healthy, active, agri-tourism and spa break tourism.
9. Accessibility