

## Greater Lincolnshire Coastal Vision

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### *The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership: a Vision for Greater Lincolnshire's Coast by 2030*

Greater Lincolnshire's key strengths in agri-food and tourism are concentrated in its coastal areas. So are many of greatest opportunities for realizing and developing those strengths as well as important challenges such as flood risk management, future water supply, environmental protection, economic growth, housing and infrastructure.

This Coastal Vision sets out how Greater Lincolnshire can build on its existing strengths, its plans and ambitions for the coast, to join with its emerging aspirations for the economy to become a force for growth.

A number of important strategies and plans set out significant aspirations for the future of Coastal Greater Lincolnshire, often based on extensive public and stakeholder consultations. The Coastal vision seeks to draw these together into a coherent whole, while focusing on the GLLEP's ambitions for the coast's contribution to Greater Lincolnshire's economic growth.

#### **Strategic context**

Greater Lincolnshire overall provides

- £12bn GVA to the UK economy (in 2013)
- £1bn visitor economy with over 17m visitors (in 2012)
- The fourth most popular tourism destination in the UK
- £1.5bn manufacturing economy
- 25% of the UK's grade 1 agricultural land
- 25% of all UK-grown vegetables
- 20% of the UK's RAF bases
- The second-fastest growing of all the shire counties with net inward migration twice the national average.

Greater Lincolnshire is ambitious to

- Increase economic output by £2.5bn over the next ten years
- Establish the UK's largest Enterprise Zone on the Humber Estuary
- Create or safeguard 9,000 jobs
- Create 1m square metres of commercial floor space

Much of this happens – or will happen – at the coast.

## The Greater Lincolnshire Coast

The Greater Lincolnshire Coast' means North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, lowland East Lindsey (as illustrated below), Boston Borough and South Holland District.



Greater Lincolnshire's coastal zone contributes significantly to the economic strengths that the LEP is ambitious to develop.

On the Humber, there are major opportunities for investment. These include

- The UK's largest port complex
- Significant existing investment in manufacturing and the renewables sector
- Transport and infrastructure connections

South of the Humber these benefits currently include

- £400m of the £1bn visitor economy
- The three nature reserves at Donna Nook, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point between them attracted 522,000 visitors in 2012, with over 90,000 visiting the RSPB reserves at Freiston Shore and Frampton Marsh in 2011.
- Easy access to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- More than 50 miles of coastline also offer traditional seaside resorts such as Skegness, Mablethorpe and Sutton-on-Sea
- Butlins at Skegness is the fourth most popular tourist destination in the UK
- Coastal Lincolnshire is responsible for growing one eighth of the nation's food and processing 70% of its fish
- 5% of all UK food processing jobs, including plants belonging to many of the largest companies in the UK food sector
- Training in the agri-food industry is provided at the University of Lincoln's Holbeach campus through the National Centre for Food Manufacturing
- Prime location for business investment from food manufacturers
- Agri-food generates GVA of over £2.5bn and employs 56,000 people

This activity is located in a broad coastal plain almost entirely at or below sea-level, amounting to nearly 40% of Greater Lincolnshire's land area. The coastal surge of December 2013 demonstrated the potential vulnerability of this area, which is currently protected from the sea by 125km of raised sea defences, supplemented by over 1,000km km of river defences. The coastal plain and the lowland fens are maintained as productive agricultural land with the aid of 4,800km of drainage channels and watercourses managed by Internal Drainage Boards.

In financial terms, the existing IDB assets represent over £150m of investment, while the Environment Agency has invested in the region of £250m over the past twenty years in sea defences alone. At present (2015), average annual coastal investment by the Environment Agency stands at about £10m, including £7m for the annual beach replenishment scheme from Mablethorpe to Skegness, known as Lincshore. This excludes large-scale capital projects to provide assets such as at Grimsby and Boston.

Without this investment the capacity of the coast to support existing communities and economic activity would be fundamentally compromised. Existing national funding mechanisms for flood risk management prioritise protection to people and property. This means that in practice it is difficult to secure national funding for defending the substantial sections of coast without existing major settlements or infrastructure. Flood risk presents an obstacle to planning for significant

growth in coastal areas, while it also affects prospects for business investment in the area.

Securing sustainable funding to manage flood risk and secure our water resources will therefore be a key challenge for the Humber and for Greater Lincolnshire over the coming years. The Humber LEP and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP have co-operated in putting forward to Government the benefits that greater flexibility in funding flood risk and water management from the Humber to the Wash, and these have helped to shape the present coastal vision.

### **A Coastal Vision for Greater Lincolnshire**

Over recent decades many initiatives and plans have been developed to support different aspects of coastal life. While these have not always been fully co-ordinated or clearly prioritized, recent initiatives seek to establish a more strategic approach to capitalize on previous successes and make the most of new and emerging investment opportunities.

The development of the Greater Lincolnshire Growth Strategy provides an important opportunity to realise these ambitions, linking coastal initiatives within a wider framework of co-ordination as a driving force behind Lincolnshire's economic potential.

The purpose of this Coastal Vision for Greater Lincolnshire is to provide this framework, articulating a common sense of direction for the county's coastal areas while supporting initiatives with common objectives to capitalize on the outcomes of previous and existing work. It is also intended to provide a supportive context to help new and future initiatives reap greater rewards by co-ordinating funding bids and aligning programmes of work.

Greater Lincolnshire has a track record of innovative approaches to the economic, social and environmental challenges experienced by its coastal communities. To a greater or lesser extent these three broad themes run throughout the range of initiatives, plans and strategies affecting the coastal areas. It is therefore proposed that the Coastal Vision should be structured around them and can be expressed as follows:

#### **Greater Lincolnshire's ambitions for the coast are**

- ***To sustain and grow coastal businesses and the economy***
- ***To sustain and develop coastal prosperity through infrastructure***
- ***To protect and sustain the coastal environment***

#### **Delivering the Coastal Vision**

As a framework document, the Coastal Vision does not seek to establish new objectives or a new strategy. Rather it seeks to support co-ordination and mutual co-operation between of key existing initiatives and plans. Each of the outcomes will therefore be realized through successful delivery of a range of existing and emerging initiatives, by promoting ongoing co-operation across initiatives and by providing a broader strategic context for new and future ideas.

### ***1 Sustaining and growing business and the economy***

Greater Lincolnshire has successfully attracted funding into its coastal communities to explore and develop approaches to tackling social issues and encouraging business investment and growth. Ranging from projects funded from LEADER and RDPE funding, to the development of innovative strategic networks such as the Coastal Action Zone and the Coastal Communities Alliance, this work has realized considerable funding and delivered numerous community initiatives.

There are significant opportunities to derive enhanced benefit from improving linkages with this approach, including liaison with the newly established coastal team and co-ordination with the developing strategic direction established through the GLLEP's Growth Strategy

The GLLEP has identified a number of key areas where Lincolnshire offers the greatest opportunities for economic growth. These are agri-food, the visitor economy, and housing. The GLLEP has identified water management as a fundamental factor in addressing these sectors.

In the coastal parts of Lincolnshire the interdependence between coastal and water management, agri-food, the visitor economy and sustainable housing growth is particularly marked. This is equally true of the agricultural, rural areas as it is for the major urban centres of Boston and Spalding, and east coast communities such as Skegness and Mablethorpe, although the balance between these elements will vary considerably according to local circumstance.

*Key plans and initiatives to achieve this outcome:*

- GLLEP Growth Strategy 2015-2030
- Greater Lincolnshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan
- Greater Lincolnshire LEP Spatial Plan
- Humber LEP Strategic Economic Plan
- Humber LEP Spatial Plan
- Lincolnshire's RDPE Strategy
- GLLEP Water Management Plan 2016
- Waterways Vision – Fens Waterways Link
- North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, East Lindsey & South East Lincolnshire Local Plans

## ***2 Sustaining and developing prosperity through infrastructure***

Coastal Lincolnshire represents a challenge for strategic and local spatial planning, with a combination of socio-economic and environmental factors that have traditionally been considered issues rather than opportunities. In particular the prevalence of low-lying land at risk from coastal inundation requires a delicately balanced approach to provide opportunities for community resilience and business growth that take a proportionate view of the potential for coastal flooding.

In recognition of the benefits of a co-ordinated approach, emerging Local Plans have incorporated key elements of the 2010 Coastal Study as part of their evidence base, and work continues to explore ways of managing the balance between development and flood resilience in the planning context.

Maintaining the extensive water management infrastructure in the coastal area is a key challenge, and heavily dependent on achieving the long term objectives for coastal management that are set out in the Shoreline Management Plans for the Lincolnshire coast.

*Key plans and initiatives to achieve this outcome:*

- Shoreline Management Plans 2010-2115
  - Flamborough Head to Gibraltar Point (2012)
  - The Wash (2012))
- Lincolnshire Coastal Study (2010)
- Humber Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy (2017/2018)
- Greater Lincolnshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan
- Greater Lincolnshire LEP Spatial Plan
- Humber LEP Strategic Economic Plan
- Humber LEP Spatial Plan
- Humber Business Case (2014)
- Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Review 2018
- Joint Lincolnshire Flood and Drainage Management Strategy 2010-2025
- North Lincolnshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014)
- North East Lincolnshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014)
- East Lindsey Local Plan 2015-2018
- South Holland Local Plan 2001-2021
- South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (in preparation)
- Lincolnshire multi-agency flood plan (LRF - 2011)
- Humber multi-agency flood plan (LRF – 2011)

### ***3 Protecting and sustaining the environment***

The Shoreline Management Plans covering the Lincolnshire coast set out a broad strategic ambition of maintaining coastal defences at their present standard and in their present location up to the year 2115, allowing for local flexibility in practical delivery. A fundamental issue here is reliable, sustainable funding. Present funding schemes focus on protecting property. This is a challenge when much of Lincolnshire's most productive agricultural land is maintained by a combination of sea defence and inland drainage, and is also, by definition, sparsely populated.

On the east coast key assets such as beaches are artificially maintained, providing simultaneously a high standard of defence and critical economic assets for the visitor economies all along the coast. The necessity of maintaining community resilience to potential coastal flooding was highlighted anew by the coastal surge of December 2013, but there remains the challenge of balancing this practical readiness with longer term pragmatism in sustaining and developing the businesses and communities that make a major contribution to the regional and UK economy.

The GLLEP has recognized the importance of this relationship between growing the county's key economic strengths, continued provision of effective flood risk management and creating opportunities for growth by enhanced water management in the round in future. The Coastal Vision seeks to assist in supporting this holistic view of water management in Lincolnshire.

The Greater Lincolnshire coast is the site of nationally important nature reserves at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point, which draw in hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, along with major reserves on the Wash coast at Freiston and Frampton. UK and European designations cover the Humber and the Wash<sup>i</sup>, while key visitor attractions have been developed through combined sea defence and habitat creation schemes such as at Freiston Shore.

Longstanding initiatives to promote the attractiveness of the coastal environment for visitors through the Coastal Country Park and the Coastal grazing Marshes are being co-ordinated in the newly emerging Wild Coast initiative. The aim of the Wild Coast is to encourage co-ordination across work to develop opportunities for growth in the fields of historic and built environment and the natural environment, with their attendant potential for encouraging local business and increasing visitor numbers and the quality of their experience.

This is an integral part of the broader objectives of partners in enhancing the economic and social potential of coastal Lincolnshire, and the Wild Coast will form a significant part of the final coastal vision.

Coastal Country Park (Lincolnshire)

Wild Coast Strategy 2017  
GLNP Nature Strategy (2012)  
Lincolnshire County Council Natural Environment Strategy (2012)  
Humber LNP Strategy

### Scope and Timescales

The Lincolnshire Coastal Vision will be delivered through the collective implementation of the range of initiatives indicated above. It is not within the remit of any single organization, or group of organisations, to achieve the broad aspirations outlined, but it is achievable with a degree of co-ordination between these programmes.

It is envisaged that the Vision should cover a medium term period, up to about 2035, although some core aspects, such as the policy intentions for coastal management in the Shoreline Management Plans are intended to provide a broad indication of the preferred approach up to 2115.

Key milestones are indicated below:

Shoreline Management Plans	2010-2115
Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk Management Strategy	2012-2025
GLLEP Growth Strategy	2015-2030
GLLEP Water Management Plan completed	December 2015
Completion of Coastal Vision for Lincolnshire	March 2016
Humber Estuary Strategy	2017/18-2030
Development of Local Plans	In progress
Wild Coast Strategy completed	2017
Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Review completed	2018/19

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<sup>i</sup> Humber: UK designations – SSSI; EU designations: SPA, SAC, Ramsar; The Wash: SSSI; EU designations: SPA, SAC