



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	29 November 2022
Subject:	Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland Infrastructure Framework

Summary:

This report sets out a framework to guide future strategic infrastructure investments in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland and invites members to review and debate the proposed approach in the context of achieving sustainable and inclusive growth for the area.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

- (1) agree the approach including the Strategic Infrastructure themes and objectives; and,
- (2) suggest amendments, enhancements or additions to the approach taken to date in the context of the current Levelling Up agenda.

1. Background

- 1.1 This report represents the annual strategic infrastructure update to Committee.
- 1.2 As part of the government's commitment to the Levelling Up agenda, infrastructure investment remains a key component of economic growth – driving productivity and skills and helping to create a net zero economy by 2050.
- 1.3 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) that are currently pending in Lincolnshire include various energy projects and as part of Water Resources East's Regional Plan, the Phase 1 non-statutory consultation has commenced on the Lincolnshire Reservoir with a view to the Development Consent Order planning application being submitted in late 2025.
- 1.4 The 8 km North Hykeham Relief Road remains a major council priority with the pre-construction phase underway. The project has been highlighted in government growth strategies.

- 1.5 Further, the county is leading a pilot on EV charging infrastructure in rural areas as part of a Midlands LEVI consortium supported by Midlands Connect and work continues on the use options for the former Gas Terminal site at Theddlethorpe including the launch of the Geological Disposal Facility Working Group and work to determine the infrastructure needs (energy, rail, road, flood management) for the site to promote future development options that support wider economic and community benefits.
- 1.6 Funding through the Levelling Up (LUF) Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is aimed at driving impactful infrastructure investments at the local level. To date £26m is being invested in Lincolnshire through LUF1 and a further £67m is being sought under LUF 2, although investment decisions have been delayed. Further, a portion of the allocated £22m of UKSPF and additional £5m rural uplift will provide some local infrastructure provision in Lincolnshire.
- 1.7 Nevertheless inflationary factors, interest rates, supply surety and funding availability (public and private funding) present significant challenges for planned and indeed commenced infrastructure projects
- 1.8 With the uncertainty around future project funding, a Framework approach has been developed to set out the case for future infrastructure needs and opportunities in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland. The framework is scalable and adaptable enabling it to respond to needs as they emerge and to prioritise investment resources.

Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland Strategic Infrastructure Framework 2023

- 1.9.1 The 2021 Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland (GL&R) Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan was underpinned by a series of assessed business case interventions assembled by partners as a response to a call for projects. However, with changes in the funding landscape and delays in the release of the Levelling Up White Paper and subsequent Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, a different approach to strategic infrastructure planning has been taken for 2023 with the production of a Framework that can be adapted to articulate the investment needs of the area and respond to future opportunities for funding through co-ordinated action planning.
- 1.10 The work has been commissioned by the GL Infrastructure Group on behalf of the upper tier, unitaries, districts councils, Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Environment Agency. An Officer Working Group, facilitated by LCC and supported by an external consultancy have completed:
 1. A review of current strategies (including the National Infrastructure Strategy, regional documentation, the GLEP's Local Industrial Strategy and Plan for Growth, Vision 2050 and Local Transport Plan 5 and the work of Local Transport Boards

2. A middle ground consultation and assessment of infrastructure gaps and emerging needs with key sector boards and utility providers married to economic opportunities – a scope that spans the ‘middle ground’ between national and local infrastructure plans and needs and is hyper critical to gaining a comprehensive infrastructure assessment for GL&R; and
3. A series of local Discovery Workshops with local authority partners to determine local growth priorities and associated infrastructure needs and constraints (framed in the context of local plans, Sustainable Urban Extensions and growth strategies)

1.11 Supported by this work, the draft Framework consists of 2 documents – an overview presentation and a more detailed technical document. The latter is attached as Appendix A.

Strategic Infrastructure

1.12 For the purposes of the Framework, ‘Strategic Infrastructure’ has been defined as *“facilities or services that enable delivery of a variety of local infrastructure, which in turn impacts on wider growth, for example roads, railways, flood defenses, digital connectivity and energy supply. This infrastructure will in turn deliver a strategic objective, both locally, regionally and potentially nationally. Projects are usually considered to be of a minimum of £500k and are usually of much larger scale”*.

1.13 Whilst the Framework focuses on strategic infrastructure, local needs have been reviewed and connected by the ‘middle ground’ work. These are defined as *“facilities or services that are essential in meeting day-to-day needs of the population, for example, schools, housing, community facilities, business/enterprise parks and local green spaces”*. Broadly the strategic infrastructure supports the delivery of the local and the Framework sets the context for this to happen driven by different partners.

The Purpose of the Framework

1.14 Collectively the purpose of the Framework is set out in Table 1:

Table 1 – Purpose of the SIDF 2023				
To jointly articulate the growth driven case for strategic infrastructure investment at GL&R level to help level up the area with other parts of the country	To show cohesion and read across in GL&R and beyond (pan regional)	To illustrate diversity and showcase local distinctive places – opportunities and challenges to level up within the county	To identify infrastructure gaps needing more detail (evidence/feasibility)	To start conversations with government departments and to support devolution discussions

The Format of the Framework

1.15 The Framework sets out a vision where people, places and the environment (planet) benefit from improved connectivity via access to better, higher paid jobs and opportunities and where they can live in better, sustainable places. This is achieved by focusing on the productive growth of the GLLEP’s key economic sectors, with infrastructure investment enabling those sectors to grow inclusively and sustainably and to connect the diverse communities and distinctive places in the region.

1.16 The 8 infrastructure enablers are set out in Table 2 with associated objectives:

Infrastructure Enablers ‘Themes’	Key Objective	Key Economic Sectors
Conditions for business Growth	To deliver focused infrastructure investment that will support business growth and job creation and will help realise an increased spend in business led R&D to equate to/or exceed the UK average. This investment will increase skilled jobs that capitalise on and grow sectoral strengths and areas of expertise, support innovative ways to address barriers to growth and help overcome polarity of urban/rural economic opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri-food • Energy • Ports and Logistics • Defence • Health and Care • Visitor Economy • Advanced Manufacturing
Digital	To ensure that GL&R will benefit from a high quality Ultrafast universal offer with gigabit capable broadband access to a greater proportion of residential and business properties than is the government target, ensuring that location is not a disadvantage, that the area is future enabled to take advantage of emerging technologies and where people and businesses are enabled to use it effectively.	
Energy	<p>To capitalise on Greater Lincolnshire’s nationally significant energy assets in the Humber Estuary and the North Sea, which combined with its rural geography, mean it is well placed to pioneer novel approaches that contribute to the Government’s commitment to reach Net Zero UK carbon emissions by 2050.</p> <p>Energy is also a key enabler of growth, so it is also imperative that GL&R retains local capacity and benefits from investment, to build resilience in local supply and to support businesses and residents in minimising costs through managed usage and optimised use of green alternatives</p>	
Health and Wellbeing	To recognise that the places we live in have a profound impact on our health and wellbeing. Significant gains in population health can be achieved by working in partnership to improve the built, natural and social environments. Creating healthier places requires co-	

	<p>production, closer working between the NHS, local authority planning teams, developers, public health professionals, voluntary sector organisations and communities themselves.</p> <p>Improving mental and physical health and wellbeing is central to levelling up GL&R and to delivering inclusive growth. With spatial and health inequality and pockets of deprivation throughout the region, improved health outcomes will improve a person's ability to fulfil their potential by learning more effectively, being more productive at work and enjoying life to the full. Through developing an evidence based, partnership approach to improving health and wellbeing in GL&R, infrastructure investment can then be targeted to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for the benefit of residents, support social mobility and inclusion and collectively further the economic growth of the region.</p>	
The Importance of Housing	To create a diverse, high quality housing stock that meets the housing delivery targets in GL&R's local plans necessary to support the area's growth ambitions, meeting the needs of residents now and in the future and contributing to Net Zero targets	
Movement of People and Goods	To ensure that through investment in the way we move people and goods, we will level up and drive inclusive economic growth and contribute to decarbonisation and climate adaptation	
Water Management and Flooding	To work collaboratively across GL&R and wider to manage the effective supply and management of water to support sustainable residential and economic growth balancing the need for a cohesive approach to East Coast flood risk management and climate adaptation whilst maintaining water supply to water intensive sectors during dry periods. The Framework will help co-ordinate infrastructure investment and multi-agency responses	
Waste and Circular Economy	To drive clean growth by addressing emerging market needs and opportunities through new technologies, industrial symbiosis, energy from waste and supporting sector strengths to develop Anaerobic Digestion (AD).	

1.17 There is full recognition that GL&R already makes a major contribution to the national economy/UKPLC through the UK Food Valley and the associated supply chain, the strength of the green energy cluster on the Humber Bank and the level of innovation emerging from key sectors, in particular defence. The area is also considered a logistical powerhouse as an international gateway for seaborne goods supported by the status of the Humber Freeport and it enjoys a strategic position on the A46 growth corridor. It is also a quality place to live and a significant destination for tourism, with a varied offer for day and overnight visitors.

- 1.18 In recognition of the area’s successful delivery of infrastructure investment and associated activity to date, a series of project spotlights appear in the document that provide short case studies within each of the infrastructure themes, whilst a section on distinctive places showcases examples of key infrastructure ‘assets’. Examples of the case studies for the ‘Conditions for Business Growth’ theme include Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park and associated new access and spine road, footways and cycleways and utility and digital infrastructure and South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone at Holbeach highlighting the National Centre for Food Manufacturing, the recently completed Hub and ongoing investment in strategic infrastructure that seeks to improve the connectivity of the site to the national road network, further enhancements to digital connectivity (speed and capacity), and ensures a sustainable and green energy supply – all of which will support further innovation and growth at the site and enable the wider evolution of the UK Food Valley and its contribution to national food security and resilience. Whilst the Lincolnshire Reservoir appears as a spotlight under the Water Management and Flood Theme in the context of partners wishing to develop an integrated water supply, climate adaptation and flood risk management approach in order to help manage flood resilience and water supply into the future.
- 1.19 Working with partners every effort has been made to develop case studies that reflect the full diversity of both the geography and the economic base of GL&R. A list of the case study examples is set out in Appendix B of this report
- 1.20 The Framework has also sought to capture:
1. Committed levelling up investment in the area (including approved Levelling Up Fund and Towns Fund projects and UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan allocations) to highlight opportunities for added value; and
 2. All Sustainable Urban Extensions in GL&R to demonstrate areas of focused growth and infrastructure need.
- 1.21 However, this doesn’t override the fact that as a largely rural area, there are connectivity constraints and there are significant pockets of deprivation in the area’s towns and city as well as the coastal areas.
- 1.22 The premise of the Framework is therefore to help accelerate the growth of the game changer sectors, support and enhance growth in our other key sectors and deliver levelling up *within* GL&R by helping those in greatest need by creating higher skilled, better paid jobs and overcoming the challenges of growth and service delivery in our more remote areas so that collectively the region can achieve ambitious growth as it too levels up *with the rest of the country*.
- 1.23 The Framework notes the strength of the area in terms of its geographical and spatial diversity and that one size does not fit all but that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts where inclusive growth, higher skills and net zero targets are concerned, and these are highlighted as cross cutting measures for infrastructure investment going forward.

- 1.24 Whilst the Framework approach does not include fully costed projects, it does set out a series of deliverables that are intended to act as a platform on which specific activities will then be developed via prioritised Action Plans. The deliverables are set out by theme in the full technical document (Appendix A) and are supported by the Working Group and the Infrastructure Group.

Next Steps

- 1.25 Whilst noting that the SIDF does not include specific projects, it is intended to revisit the 'top 10' projects from 2021 and to continue to support the coordinated development of emerging projects at varying stages of development which will be brought forward and assessed by their contribution to the Framework – focused on the themes and priority sectors identified. This is likely to be an ongoing process overseen by the Working Group and the Infrastructure Group and facilitated by LCC. The Council will also ensure that its own strategic priorities are represented in this process.
- 1.26 It is then intended to develop Action Plans to identify what infrastructure gaps there are in GL&R and tailor this to emerging funding and policy opportunities. The initial focus is likely to be around Water Management and Flooding, Waste and Circular Economy and Energy. The scope of activity to address the gaps will be undertaken in the next stage of work and will include bringing in other partners and building on any work currently under way for example the Energy Options Analysis work also being reported to this meeting.
- 1.27 The work will be grounded in relationships to wider strategies and there will be ongoing engagement with the GLLEP to ensure that the Framework remains valid and develops in real time.
- 1.28 In the meantime, the Framework will be used to lobby central government to raise the case for coordinated infrastructure investment ensuring an early profile is established with departmental leads including regional engagement with the Cities and Local Growth Unit.
- 1.29 Given the scale of some of the infrastructure requirements and the issues that they seek to address (e.g., Water Management and Flooding, the Movement of People and Goods and Energy) the Framework will be used to work with proximate areas and pan regional bodies such as Midlands Connect, Transport for the North, Midlands Engine etc. to amplify the case for cross area infrastructure investment and upgrades. Whilst work with providers (particularly energy, water, digital) will be pinpointed to maximize sustainable services and to support other themes such as the viability and affordability of housing in GL&R.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 There are some ongoing funding opportunities for infrastructure investment in the county. Projects at the time of writing are likely to be localised rather than strategic but will nevertheless support economic growth.
- 2.2 To guide strategic infrastructure going forward, the Framework will provide a wider time horizon to previous Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plans. It will co-ordinate the area's enabling infrastructure 'asks' and can be used to lobby and raise the profile of the area's economic importance to UKPLC and to articulate its internal levelling up needs and the issues (and solutions) in terms of rural and coastal connectivity. With underpinning Action Plans prioritised to greatest needs and opportunities the area will be able to develop effective business cases and/or align strategies to position the area to access infrastructure opportunities in 'real time' and prevent delays and ensure that partners are able to respond to an agreed set of priorities avoiding duplication or wasted efforts.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not applicable

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Framework 2023
Appendix B	Case Studies Used

5. Background Papers

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

This report was written by Mandy Ramm, Funding and Investment Manager, who can be contacted on 01522 550638 or Mandy.ramm@lincolnshire.gov.uk.