

# THE WEST CUMBRIA ECONOMIC BLUEPRINT

Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENERGY COAST INNOVATION ZONE...

3,000 + ADDITIONAL JOBS...

INCREASING GVA LEVELS BY 2027...

**A DIVERSE, RESILIENT AND LOW CARBON WEST CUMBRIAN ECONOMY.**



# FOREWORD

The West Cumbria Economic Blueprint sets out Britain's Energy Coasts vision for the development of the local economy in West Cumbria over the next 15 years. It articulates the collective aims of local public and private sector partners to build on the area's unique nuclear expertise and global position to develop a dynamic, wealth creating, sustainable economic future for today, tomorrow and future generations. At its heart is the identification of the Energy Coast Innovation Zone, as the focus for investment along the coastal plain of West Cumbria.

The Blueprint underlines the significant role that West Cumbria will play in delivering the nation's future energy needs at the same time as helping to deliver the Government's low carbon agenda. Moreover the Blueprint identifies a strategy that maximises the benefit of investment in nuclear and energy infrastructure at the same time as supporting innovation and expansion through diversification.

To be successful and to achieve our challenging ambitions it is recognised that significant investment is required in the physical and social infrastructure. We are committed to working together to deliver on a programme of prioritised actions which together will create the stimulus for further private sector-led investment. Through an annual implementation plan partners will identify key actions and the contribution to delivery that partners are able to make.

The Blueprint represents a step change in collective aspiration, thinking and action. It will establish a catalyst for delivering positive economic benefits for all the people of West Cumbria, the wider county of Cumbria and the nation as a whole.

The image features a central graphic on a dark blue background. At the center is a glowing, textured orb. Four large, semi-transparent arrows point outwards from the orb towards the top, bottom, left, and right. Surrounding this central arrangement is a circular ring of smaller, white-outlined arrows pointing in various directions. The background is a stylized world map composed of a grid of small dots. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are decorative bokeh light effects consisting of overlapping circles and starbursts.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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West Cumbria is poised to deliver over 3,000 jobs as well as growing its GVA contribution to the UK economy over the next 15 years. The area is at the forefront of investment in the nation's energy security, including the generation of low carbon energy and Clean Tech products. It will make a major contribution to meeting the UK's energy needs as well as helping to deliver the Government's low carbon agenda. It is also home to one of the UK's largest concentrations of high tech, advanced manufacturing employment.

This Economic Blueprint sets out a strategy aimed at capitalising on our strengths, helping our businesses to diversify, to innovate and grow alongside ensuring that West Cumbria delivers to its full economic potential.

Our approach to create an enterprising culture and to support business innovation results in (or 'is brought to life through') the establishment of the Energy Coast Innovation Zone" which is focused on the coastal plain area of West Cumbria.

## The Purpose of the Blueprint

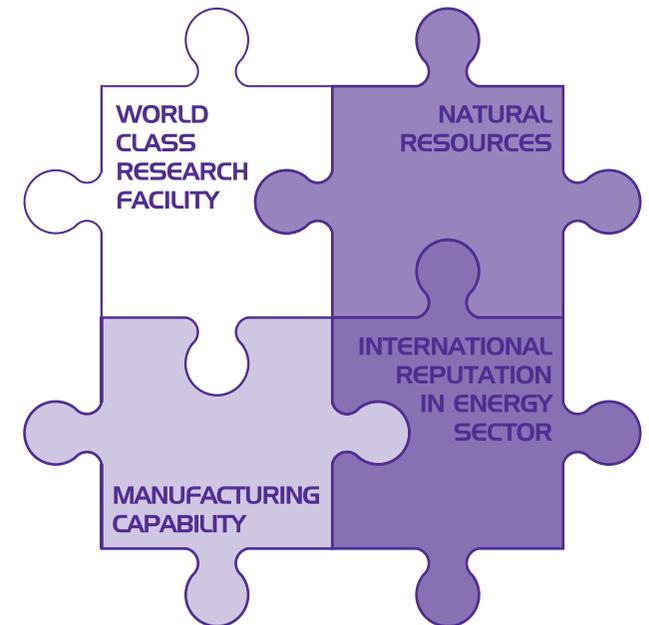
The Economic Blueprint sets out a strategy that is designed to take account of new opportunities, investment that is on the horizon, and the challenges which need to be overcome if the economic potential of the coastal plain area is to be realised. The Blueprint highlights a programme of actions which will help to accelerate business innovation both within the coastal plain area and beyond it. An implementation plan provides the detail of the projects which will help achieve the Blueprint, including timescales for delivery, costs and responsibilities.

## The Opportunity

West Cumbria has existing business sector strengths in the manufacturing sector, which has performed well over the recent past at a time when UK manufacturing has been contracting. Our resilience in the manufacturing sector, including strengths in chemicals, metals, precision engineering, materials security and other related activities provides a good platform for further manufacturing growth in the future.

West Cumbria is a globally recognised centre of expertise for the civil nuclear sector. Going forwards there is potential for a £90 billion investment in the nuclear industry, which will peak in 2022/2023.

## West Cumbria's sources of Competitive Advantage



This investment will have far reaching consequences for the local economy, including the tendering of new contracts in relation to construction, business and professional services, scientific and technical activities as well as secondary expenditure which will boost the hotels, food and accommodation sectors locally.

This is a “once in a generation” opportunity. The Blueprint is designed to capture as much of the investment value as possible locally. It also seeks to create an environment that encourages innovation and supports an enterprise culture where local people grasp this opportunity. This will involve equipping local businesses to access contracts, providing the right level of skills and expertise to enable local people to access employment opportunities, providing land and property in the right locations for businesses looking for a local base and enhancing the transport and digital communications infrastructure to cope with increased demand. Investing in these areas will not only help to ensure that West Cumbria benefits fully from decommissioning and new build expenditure, but that the infrastructure is in place which will make the area more competitive as a business location in the future.

## The Strategy

The strategy involves two linked areas of activity.

1. **Creating an environment in which businesses and individuals are encouraged to innovate.** We will establish an Energy Coast Innovation Zone (Innovation Zone) which will offer businesses unparalleled access to research and development, business support, finance, joint venture and partnership opportunities, a competitive business infrastructure and a range of high quality business premises that are easy to access. This business friendly environment in the Innovation Zone will help to deliver more business start ups and a more diverse business and resilient employment base that will provide a long term source of employment and wealth creation for West Cumbria; and
2. **Putting in place measures in the short term to ensure that as much of the substantial investment in nuclear new build and decommissioning is captured by local businesses as possible.** This will involve working with our nuclear and associated partners to ensure that research and innovation flows into the local supply chain, making local businesses more competitive. Particularly important at Sellafield, which contains a wealth of applied technical knowledge and expertise, this will also involve working with partners to ensure that their social and economic commitments to West Cumbria are delivered fully.

It will also involve supporting our businesses to ensure that they are able to access contract opportunities and benefit from this investment, enabling them to create more high value jobs as well as providing opportunities for delivering the economic regeneration of our principal town centres of Whitehaven and Workington.

These areas of activity will need to be supported by targeted investment in key infrastructure and the assets of the area – to ensure that West Cumbria remains competitive for business in the future. Delivering these investments alongside targeted action to develop an enterprise culture, workforce skills and job readiness will ensure that the whole community of West Cumbria benefits from the economic opportunities that are created.

The strategy has four objectives and they are:

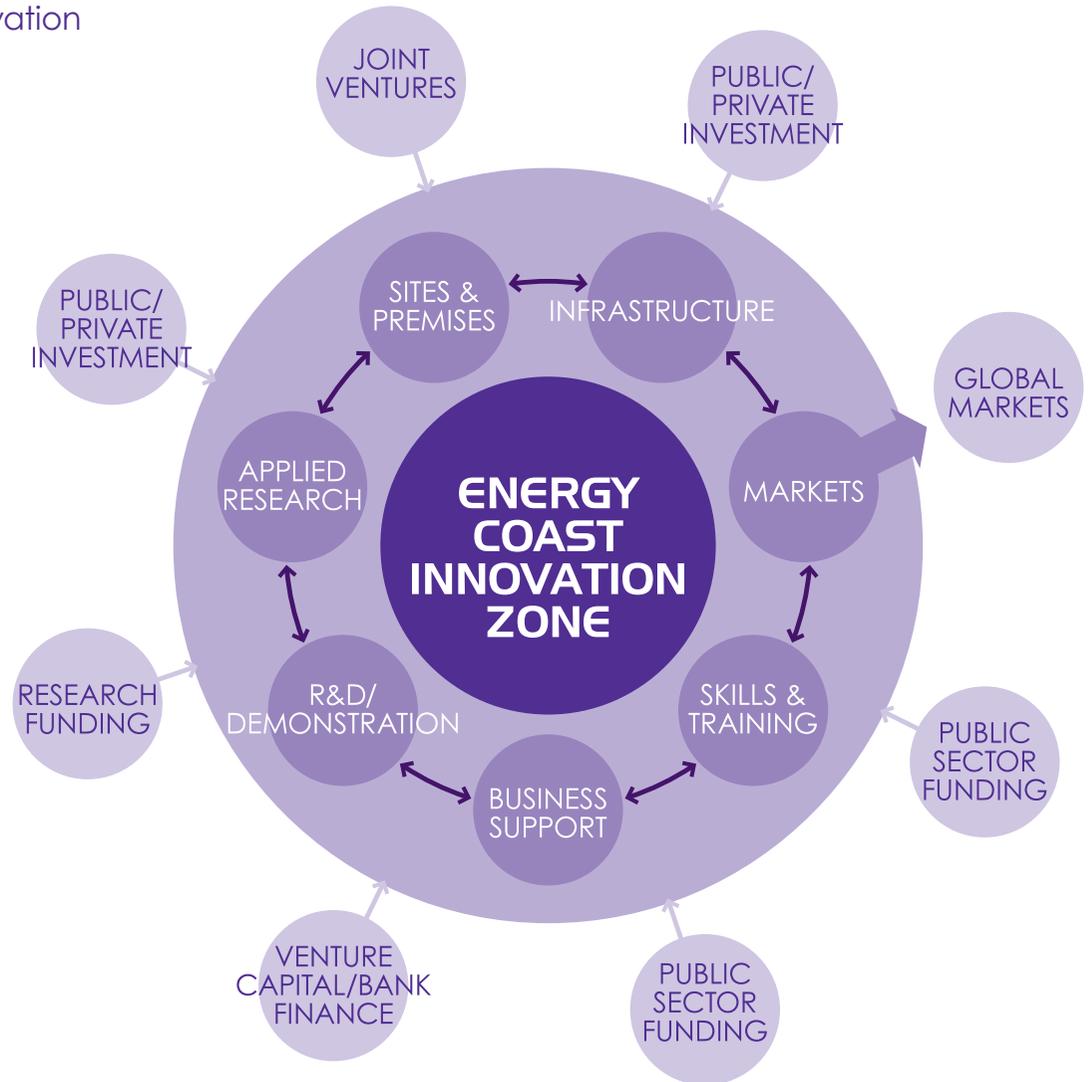
1. **Objective 1:** Optimising Worldwide Nuclear Investment and Building on our Expertise
2. **Objective 2:** Business Expansion and Diversification
3. **Objective 3:** Providing a Supportive Physical Infrastructure
4. **Objective 4:** Growing the Asset Base

In order to achieve our strategy and to realise the objectives listed above, we will focus delivery on the Energy Coast Innovation Zone and a small number of transformational actions within the Innovation Zone relating to:

- Applied research
- Research and Development/ Demonstration
- Enterprise
- Business support
- Skills and training
- Accessing markets
- Infrastructure
- Sites and premises

Underpinning the transformational actions will be an annual Implementation Plan, describing partners contribution and potential sources of funding.

### How the Innovation Zone will work



The background is a dark blue gradient with a faint world map. In the center, there is a glowing, textured orb. Four large, semi-transparent arrows point outwards from the center towards the top, bottom, left, and right. A circular frame surrounds the central orb, and within this frame, there are several smaller, white-outlined arrows pointing in various directions. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and global.

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# INTRODUCTION

# I INTRODUCTION

This Economic Blueprint identifies the transformational actions that are needed to realise the economic potential of the coastal plain area of West Cumbria and associated benefits and prosperity for a wider area of West Cumbria. It is designed to position the local economy to benefit from significant investment in the energy sector and to diversify the economy of the area to ensure that there is a positive legacy in the longer term.

The strategic focus and actions have been developed through the involvement of a range of partners including:

- Britain's Energy Coast West Cumbria Ltd
- Copeland Borough Council
- Allerdale Borough Council
- Cumbria County Council
- The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
- Nuclear Management Partners
- The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
- Private Sector Companies

The Blueprint sets out a recommended joint approach to economic development including a specific focus on creating an environment in the coastal plain area of West Cumbria which is attractive to and supportive of businesses.

For West Cumbria to reach its full economic potential we recognise the important contribution that good quality schools and healthcare, sufficient choice and quality of housing, a modern transport infrastructure, a supportive planning policy framework and attractive and well maintained public realm plays. These “wider conditions” are what businesses expect in every area of the UK and it is critical that West Cumbria offers the best quality infrastructure to attract investors and retain people in the local economy. This will require investment in West Cumbria's schools, healthcare provision and housing to ensure that the area offers the “best in class” and can compete successfully for investment.

The Blueprint does not pretend to be a plan for addressing these “wider conditions” for investment. Rather, its focus is on ensuring that West Cumbria:

1. Maximises its potential in the areas which it has the clearest sources of competitive advantage;
2. Transforms to a low carbon and diversified economy – ensuring that West Cumbria remains competitive after the planned investment in the nuclear sector; and
3. Optimises the impact of current planned investment as well as ensuring benefits for the whole community.

In a time of limited resources for delivery maintaining our focus on the actions which will yield the greatest benefits for our economy, our businesses and the whole community is essential. The Blueprint is designed to provide this strategic focus and to work alongside existing plans and strategies to ensure that the social infrastructure of West Cumbria is developed in tandem.

The Blueprint will be underpinned by an annual implementation plan describing partners contributions as reflected in their own plans. It will also identify the additional resources that are required to ensure that the proposed transformation of West Cumbria becomes a reality.

## Supporting Plans and Strategies – delivering the wider conditions for investment

The Blueprint by its very nature is a strategic document, with a specific focus on the coastal plain area and the wider economic benefits that this area can generate for West Cumbria. It prioritises actions to diversify and strengthen the business base and to ensure that people are able to access jobs, training and other economic opportunities. It is completed by a range of strategies and plans which are identified at Annex 1.

1	2	3
4	5	6

- 1: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
- 2: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
- 3: Picture courtesy of Britain's Energy Coast
- 4: Picture courtesy of National Nuclear Laboratory
- 5: Picture courtesy of Britain's Energy Coast
- 6: Picture courtesy of Britain's Energy Coast



# The Location of West Cumbria

## UK Context



## Local Context





# THE CONTEXT FOR INVESTMENT

## 2 THE CONTEXT FOR INVESTMENT

West Cumbria, located on the north west coast of England, is a sub-regional area defined by the Duddon Estuary in the south and the Solway Firth in the north. To its west is the Irish Sea and the Lake District National Park lies to the east. West Cumbria comprises an area of over 800 square miles, over half of which is within the boundary of the Lake District National Park and over 70 miles of coastline. West Cumbria comprises the local authority areas of Copeland and Allerdale.

The area is the home to over 166,000 people and working age population of 103,500 people. Today there are 6,400 enterprises operating in West Cumbria across a diverse range of sectors.

The economy of West Cumbria has been dominated by waves of heavy industry over the past 200 years and the area has attracted people from across the globe to work in its industries. The economy has evolved over time, from the exploitation of iron ore and coal which provided the basis for steel, railway and mining industries, to the growth of the chemical industry and latterly the creation of one of the World's largest nuclear technology hubs at Sellafield. West Cumbria has a long history and heritage in the production of energy, as well as a marine industry linked to its coastal location. Today the economy is starting to evolve into a high tech manufacturing base, albeit with the nuclear sector still playing a significant role.

### A Unique Economy

Understanding the unique structure of West Cumbria's economy is key to understanding its future growth prospects and the type of policy support and investment that is required.

In order to understand the structure of West Cumbria's economy a Socio-Economic Assessment was prepared in 2011 by the Cumbria Intelligence Observatory. Alongside this, the University of Cumbria (Centre for Regional Economic Development) was specifically commissioned to draw out the implications for developing the Blueprint. These reports provide the definitive source of information on the links between the business base of the area, its workforce and the well being of residents. The findings are summarised below, drawing out implications for the Blueprint strategy.

### *Business Structure*

West Cumbria has a long history of heavy industry associated with metals and the energy sector. West Cumbria's employment structure is distinct compared to the national average due to the high proportion of workers in manufacturing (16,100 jobs). This accounts for a quarter of all employment and a third of all full-time employment in the area. The dominance of the manufacturing sector is also reflected in data on Gross Value Added (GVA) which reveals that the production sector accounts for more than a third of all GVA in West Cumbria.

However, the way that West Cumbria has developed in the last decades as a "branch plant" economy means that much of this value leaks out of the economy to firms which are head quartered outside West Cumbria.

The prominence of the manufacturing sector compared to the UK is related to the operation of Sellafield and its supply chain. Sellafield is undertaking a programme of decommissioning activity involving a major multi £billion investment programme, however in the long term this will lead to a rationalisation of employment. It is important to recognise this change which is on the horizon and the imperative to develop replacement jobs.

The public sector is also a significant employer in West Cumbria. Public administration, health and education combined provide 15,500 jobs which represent 24.6% of total employment. This is lower than the equivalent national average of 28.2%.

However, classification by organisation type is a more appropriate measure of public sector dependence due to the dominance of Sellafield Ltd. Under this definition, a third of all employment is in the public sector. In Copeland District, this figure rises to a half making it the most public sector dependant district in Great Britain. This poses challenges for the area in an era of public sector spending cuts and contraction of activity.

The 2010 Cumbria Business Survey demonstrates that while West Cumbria is dominated by a few large employers, the majority of businesses are very small and rely predominantly on local markets for their sales of goods and services. Across West Cumbria as a whole, 79% of respondents to the business survey obtain over three quarters of their business from within Cumbria. Dependence on local markets is particularly high for business in the construction and accommodation /food sectors. In Copeland, 74% of businesses are entirely dependent on local customers. Given the finite nature of customer demand that is capable of being generated from within Cumbria, a challenge is to encourage companies into domestic (UK) and overseas customer markets, as well as continuing to serve the local customer base.

### *Occupational Structure*

The dominance of larger industrial employers in West Cumbria has impacts on the occupational structure. West Cumbria has a high proportion of people employed in skilled manual trades (16.8% compared to only 10.5% nationally). However, the dominance of large employers that manage facilities via headquarters outside Cumbria contributes towards a low representation of managerial and senior occupations. Trends over time indicate that managerial employment has been in decline between 2006 and 2010 while employment in skilled manual occupations has increased (+17%).

There is a challenge going forward to build back the managerial capacity and to encourage investment in both production and hybrid “manu-services”<sup>1</sup>.

### *Performance of the Economy*

Between 2000 and 2008, West Cumbria experienced employment growth of 9.8% which was significantly higher than the national average. This growth was driven in actual job increases by a number of sectors including retailing, hotels and restaurants, business services and public sector services. In the same period, manufacturing employment marginally decreased (-5%), compared to a pronounced national decline of over 28%. Manufacturing has remained relatively resilient in West Cumbria, despite prevailing trends at a national level. The health of the manufacturing sector is critical to West Cumbria's economic prospects and provides the basis for demand in many other sectors of the local economy.

### *Deprivation and Worklessness*

High levels of worklessness are focused around the urban core settlements of Workington, Whitehaven, Cleaton Moor and Maryport which are located in close proximity to major employers, not least Sellafield. There is a prevailing distinction between high deprivation levels in the key towns within the coastal area and less severe deprivation levels elsewhere in rural West Cumbria. High deprivation levels in localised areas of West Cumbria are characterised by poor health levels, low educational attainment and skills levels and high levels of worklessness.

The prevalence of these conditions in the urban core is closely related to the leakage of GVA outside the area. Retaining more value within West Cumbria is a key opportunity in terms of creating more well paid job opportunities for local people.

This Blueprint contains a series of “transformational actions” which will lead to job growth and new opportunities arising. It is imperative, through the investment and policy actions that flow from the Blueprint, that high levels of inequality across West Cumbria are reduced and the whole community benefits from investment. In order to do this it is important to learn from previous attempts to secure benefits from investment in the area.

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<sup>1</sup> Defined by the Work Foundation (online) as combined packages of goods and services which are designed to offer complete customer solutions

## Working Age Population

Without a growth in employment opportunities providing an impetus for people to migrate into the area the population is projected to fall based upon research by Cumbria Intelligence Observatory<sup>2</sup>, with this ultimately limiting the local labour force that is available to businesses. The creation of an economy which provides opportunities for the emerging workforce of the future will be important in addressing both the migration out of young people in their late teenage years and addressing a youth unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds, which at 7.2%, is well above the national average for that age group.

West Cumbria has outperformed the UK in recent years in terms of retaining its manufacturing employment and skills base. However this cluster of manufacturing activity is closely related to the supply chain for Sellafield and as such the health of many manufacturing firms (not all) is closely aligned with the investment plans of Sellafield. The retention of manufacturing skills provides a source of competitive advantage, as does the high-tech nature of the manufacturing activity undertaken locally. However, the Blueprint needs to respond to the limited exposure of firms to customers outside Cumbria as well as the reliance on contracts from the nuclear sector.

<sup>2</sup> 'Projections Paper', GVA / Cumbria County Council (2011)





**THE  
OPPORTUNITY**

# 3 THE OPPORTUNITY

## Sources of Competitive Advantage

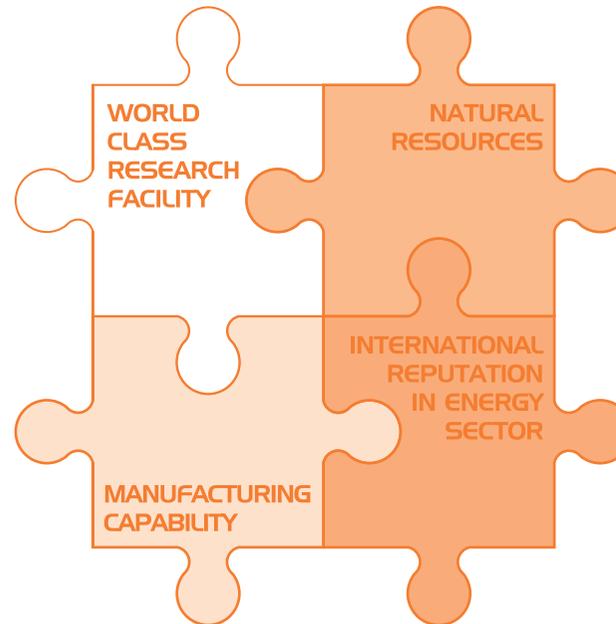
West Cumbria has a proud history of industry and energy production and continues to play a national role in terms of energy supply and security. It is also recognised as a global centre for the nuclear industry with world class research capabilities at the National Nuclear Laboratory and the Dalton Institute. It also has abundant land and marine resources which in the future will increasingly be a source of competitive advantage.

As the UK strives to move towards a low carbon economy that is less dependent on fossil fuels, there is a real opportunity for West Cumbria to lead the way once again by:

- Applying and commercialising its global research specialisms and knowledge to help develop low carbon energy production;
- Making the most of our international reputation in the energy sector, particularly in the civil nuclear sector;
- Harnessing the natural resources of the area which provide a latent source of low carbon energy;
- Providing an environment in which businesses can innovate and develop new technologies, easily adopt new low carbon technologies, develop low carbon processes and benefit from local energy systems; and

- Providing an environment and infrastructure which enable residents to make sustainable choices and benefit from lower cost living.

## West Cumbria's sources of Competitive Advantage



Investing now to create the conditions in which a West Cumbria low carbon economy can flourish in the future will provide a long term source of competitive and comparative advantage for the area.

West Cumbria's continued ability to produce and sell its manufacturing skills represents a core opportunity in this respect. It has retained manufacturing skills where other areas have lost them. This industrial base includes a diverse range of companies including major employers such as Innovia, Iggesund, James Walker and New Balance. However, as identified in Section 2 actual employment in the manufacturing sector has been reducing in West Cumbria, albeit at a far reduced rate than the UK.

Managerial capacity has also been reducing at the same time. Therefore whilst West Cumbria has a range of competitive advantages, the overall size of manufacturing base is shrinking and this trend is linked to the investment decisions of the nuclear sector. It is critical that alongside interventions that will play to West Cumbria's competitive advantages, there is a dual focus on measures to equip local residents to develop businesses and to access jobs in other supporting sectors of the economy.

## Planned Investment

There are several key investments in the nuclear sector that are planned over the lifetime of the Blueprint which in themselves will create major economic opportunities for West Cumbria. They include:

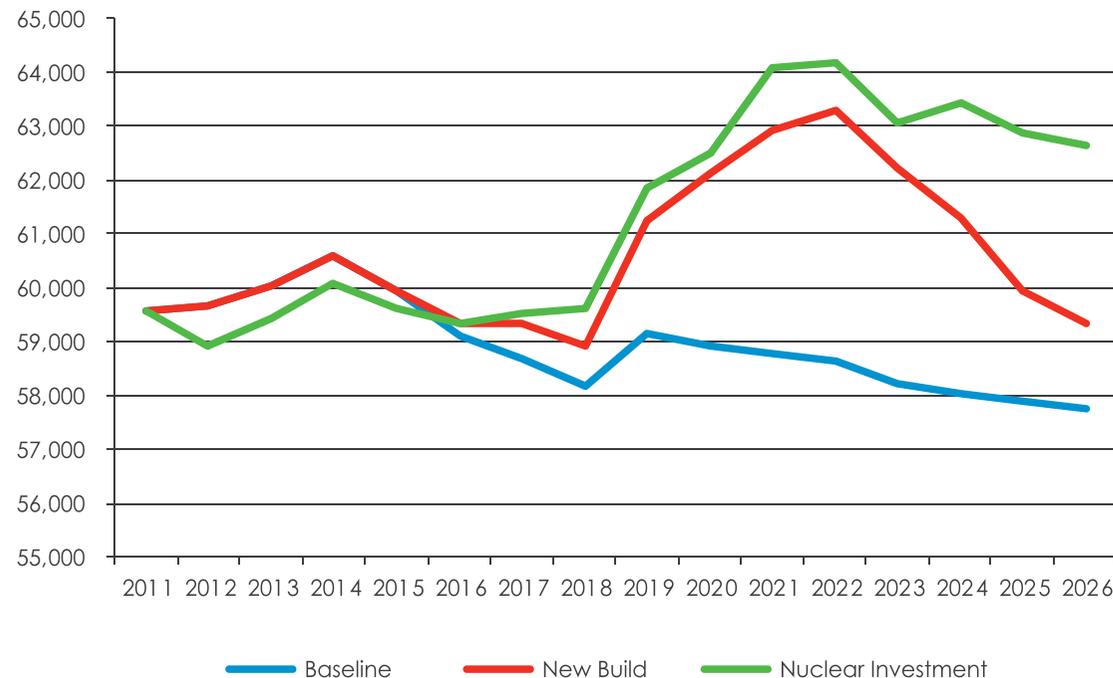
- Nuclear Decommissioning and New Build Investment** - A substantial investment in decommissioning is planned at Sellafield associated with the Lifetime Plan for the facility. Additional construction projects are anticipated on the Sellafield site building on the facilities and expertise gained in the area through the process of decommissioning. Local businesses can potentially benefit from new contractual opportunities and there will be an initial increase in employment opportunities associated with decommissioning activity.
- The area is also strongly placed to host one of eight planned new nuclear plants across the UK. Should this occur, private investment is likely to be in the order of £10bn. This investment presents the opportunity to attract new skilled individuals and their families into the area and create a lasting and positive impact by the provision of new jobs, new homes, infrastructure and services as well as re invigorating the existing offer in terms of visitor accommodation, retail centres, educational facilities and business and industry locations.

There is also an opportunity for local businesses to benefit from contracts associated with the construction process and operation of the plant.

The employment impact of these investment is illustrated in the following chart. This illustrates both the impact of new nuclear and the additional planned nuclear projects at Sellafield and associated growth in other sectors of the economy.

## Projected change in FTEs in West Cumbria – the Impact of New Nuclear and other Nuclear Investment Projects

FTEs in West Cumbria 2011 - 2026



1: Picture courtesy Cumbria Woodlands

2: Picture courtesy of Lake District National Park Authority

Without nuclear new build or associated investment (the baseline scenario) the economy will contract by approximately 1,800 jobs to 2027.

With nuclear new build and related investment approximately 3,000 jobs could potentially be created. However the majority of these jobs would be in non nuclear sectors of the economy – demonstrating that this investment is critical to the continued economic health of the area.

Given the downward employment trend that is faced without this investment, the Blueprint should provide the framework for capturing the full benefits of this investment in the short to medium term and turn this into a source of competitive advantage for local businesses.

It is important to note that planned investment in the nuclear sector peaks in around 2022/2023 and declines thereafter.

Creating the conditions for business diversification, based on West Cumbria's competitive advantages, is therefore essential if employment is to be sustained and grown. Enabling more businesses to diversify will ensure that the economy is sustained in the post nuclear investment period.

## Sector Specific Opportunities for West Cumbria

There is a need to focus on the sectors and activities in which West Cumbria has competitive advantages, which will yield the greatest economic benefits and which offer the greatest diversification potential. As previously noted, there is an opportunity to create the positive conditions for West Cumbria to transform into a low carbon economy and in doing so, to maintain a competitive advantage. This will involve intelligently combining strengths in the area's world class research capacity, its business base, its people (and their skills) and the area's abundant natural resources. Specific sectors which provide an opportunity for West Cumbria include:

### "Clean Tech"/ Low Carbon Industries

The term Clean Tech refers to a diverse range of products, services and processes that harness renewable materials and energy sources to minimise carbon emissions and commercial waste. This is a dynamic and growing sector with an estimated value of £160bn globally and 30% revenue growth recorded in 2010 alone. Projecting growth in the future to 2018 it is forecast that the principal Clean Tech sectors of solar, photovoltaics, tidal, wind power and biofuels will increase revenues to more than £214bn.



1

1: Picture courtesy of Britain's Energy Coast  
2: Picture courtesy of Lake District National Park Authority

2



West Cumbria has competitive advantages in the development of this sector, including the globally recognised research and development capacity of the UK National Nuclear Laboratory and investment in the world class Dalton Institute's facility.

R&D expertise, business experience and expertise gained in the civil nuclear sector provides a platform for the development of Clean Tech products, processes and services. The commercialisation of this knowledge into manufacturing activity is a key economic opportunity for West Cumbria. West Cumbria's climate, terrain and location make it suitable for the generation of low

carbon energy from a range of sources including tidal, offshore wind, biomass, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste. As well as providing direct jobs associated with the energy production process, there is an opportunity to work with local businesses and to ensure that they are competitively placed to provide products and services to energy companies looking to develop facilities in West Cumbria.

Additionally there is an opportunity to apply the technological expertise of West Cumbrian manufacturing businesses to the manufacture of components for technologies such as hydrogen fuel cells and photonics.

### *Advanced Manufacturing*

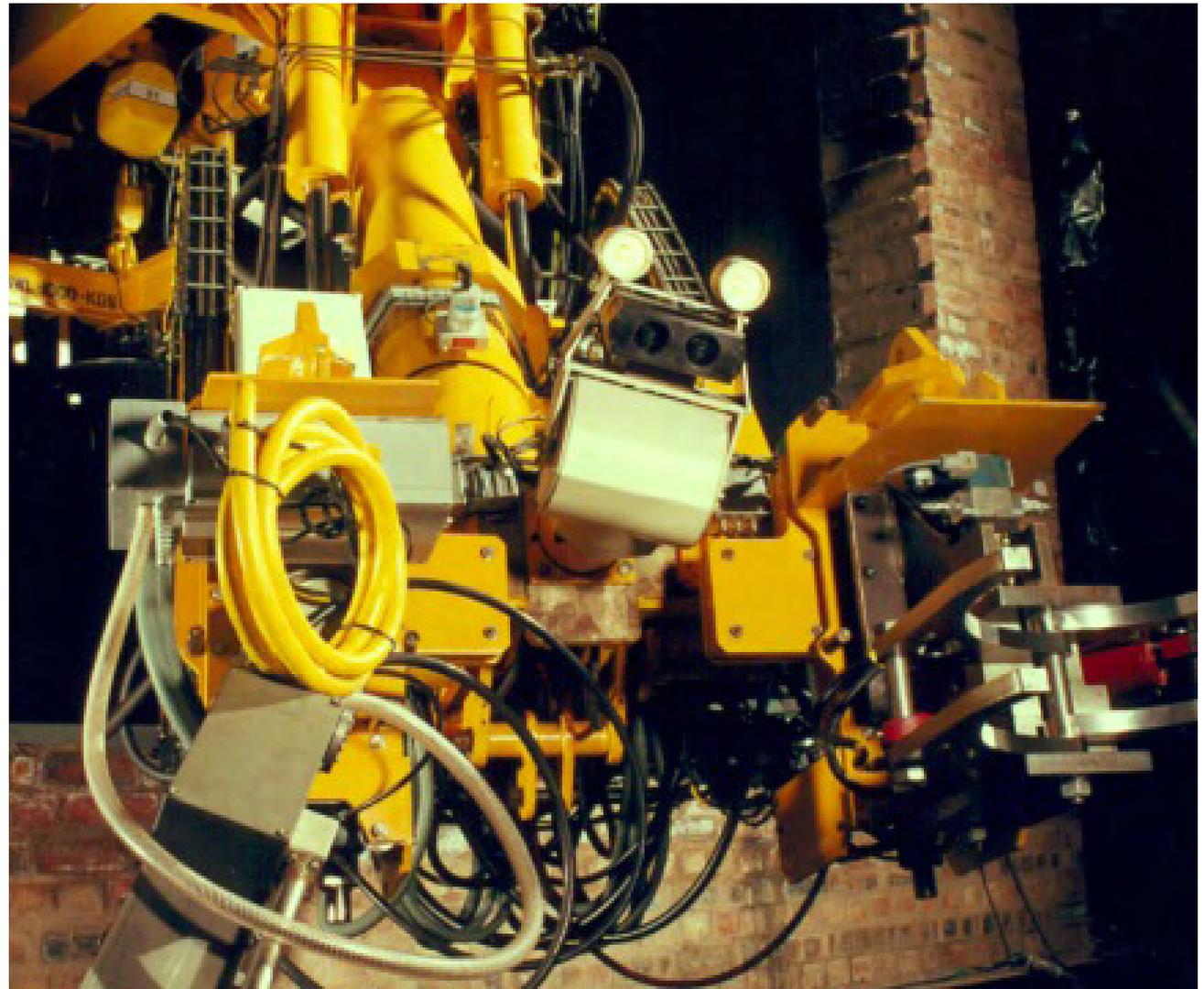
West Cumbria contains a cluster of dynamic businesses in the manufacturing sector, located both within Allerdale and Copeland. The business base in this broad sector includes "home grown" business success stories as well as companies that have a base in West Cumbria, but which are head quartered elsewhere.

The relationship between manufacturing activity and the civil nuclear sector is an important feature of West Cumbria's businesses and this long standing association means that there is a cluster of businesses with strengths in precision engineering, metals and chemicals sub sectors.

1: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

The effect of the nuclear sector extends beyond contractors through contracts awarded to companies in the supply chain locally. Over the last decade, while the UK's manufacturing economy has shrunk at a fast pace, West Cumbria has retained its manufacturing base. While this is undoubtedly linked to the presence of the nuclear sector, it does provide an opportunity for the future, particularly in light of the renewed national focus on growing export activity and raising GVA levels through manufacturing. West Cumbria can play a role in helping the UK to diversify, by growing its business base and output in the manufacturing sector.

There is an opportunity to ensure that West Cumbria's existing manufacturing firms remain competitive in the future through unrivalled access to technological innovation and knowledge arising from the academic institutions in the area. There is also an opportunity to supply products and services to a growing Clean Tech industry in the area, as well as contributing to process innovation in the sector which will enable them to access a wider customer base.



## Nuclear Decommissioning

Between 40 and 60 nuclear reactors worldwide will need to be decommissioned over the coming years. West Cumbria is a global leader in nuclear decommissioning and has a recognised waste management capability. Planned investment will strengthen this position with a range of new projects commissioned. Decommissioning skills and expertise are currently relatively “contained” with Sellafield Ltd and there is an opportunity to work with Sellafield and the nuclear decommissioning partners to help to commercialise this knowledge in the context of West Cumbria's business base.

There is significant potential to export and apply dismantling and decommissioning skills to other nuclear and high hazard reduction projects across the world. Additionally there is an opportunity to attract in businesses to West Cumbria that will benefit from being part of a knowledge cluster in relation to decommissioning expertise.

There is also significant potential to develop business innovation in related fields such as materials recycling and security alongside the development of new fuels, building on the scientific and technical expertise in West Cumbria.



1: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

However, in responding to this opportunity there is a need to provide support for local companies for them to access international opportunities as well as a mechanism for knowledge transfer from Sellafield to the local business base.

### *Nuclear New Build Expertise*

One quarter of the UK's current energy generating capacity is due to disappear by 2020 as a consequence of power station closures and needs to be replaced with secure, low carbon, affordable energy. West Cumbria will play a nationally significant role in meeting the demand arising.

Nuclear new build in West Cumbria is by no means a certainty. However, if the development does proceed it will generate an unprecedented level of investment in the area, creating significant levels of both direct and indirect employment which will have land and commercial property implications<sup>3</sup>. By raising the international profile of West Cumbria it also has the potential to stimulate investment and growth in other linked sectors of the economy.

Plans to commission new reactors are also being developed in Finland, France, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Poland, with North America, China, India, Korea and Thailand also exploring options for increasing their nuclear capacity.



3 SKM (2011) – “Nuclear Topic Paper”

There may therefore be the potential to export the skills and services of West Cumbrian businesses, thereby tapping into a global market and using the experience gained locally to sell products and services to international markets.

### *Growth in Supporting Sectors – the “whole economy” benefits*

We also recognise the importance of other sectors of the economy which will play role in our continued growth and economic diversification. These sectors provide the support for the major drivers of the economy and demand for services and products in supporting sectors is likely to grow in line with the level of planned investment in key sectors.

Supporting sectors also provide a very significant proportion of jobs in West Cumbria and therefore, the continued development of these sectors is important to ensuring that the whole community benefits from the Blueprint.

Supporting sectors for West Cumbria include:

**Construction** – The scale of planned investment in West Cumbria is unprecedented and there will be many new contract opportunities for local firms in the residential, leisure and commercial sectors. This will lead to more opportunities for construction related employment and access to additional jobs locally. There is a growing need to incorporate “modern construction techniques” in major building projects in order to streamline costs and to ensure the competitiveness of West Cumbria’s construction firms in the future.

**Retailing** – retail employment is forecast to grow in West Cumbria linked to the wider growth in the local economy and demand for convenience and comparison products. Increased employment opportunities and the attraction of additional households to live and work in West Cumbria will enhance demand for retail products and services.

**Business and Professional Services** – demand for business and professional services is forecast to grow, initially related to nuclear new build and decommissioning activity. However, future growth in advanced manufacturing and Clean Tech sectors could lead to increasing demand for business and professional services. There is a growing trend nationally for hybrid “manu-services” which provide integrated production and service solutions to clients. There is an opportunity to encourage this type of concentric diversification within the West Cumbrian business base – building on recognised expertise in the manufacturing sector.

**The Visitor Economy** – there will be growing demand and opportunities for businesses operating in the accommodation, food and drink sectors linked to major investment in new build and decommissioning activity. With an increasing presence of multi-national firms operating from West Cumbria there will be a growing market for business visitors and associated expenditure. Peaks in the construction and service sector workforce will also enhance demand for the services of businesses within this sector. Prevailing trends in terms of leisure expenditure on short breaks, coupled with the environmental quality of the coast and proximity of West Cumbria to the Lake District National Park could also contribute to growth of the visitor economy. Consideration should be given towards creating the right offer of attractions to support this growth.

**Arts, Culture and Leisure Sectors** – The arts and cultural sector makes an important contribution to the development of an enterprising and creative culture. With a growing and diverse population, as well as demand created from the visitor economy/ visitor spending there are opportunities for employment growth in the arts and cultural sectors. Activities could include support for the performing and visual arts.

**Leisure** – the long term trend of expenditure on leisure increasing as a proportion of household expenditure, coupled with the addition of new households residing in West Cumbria, will lead to enhanced opportunities in the leisure sector.

**Education** – with a focus on supporting the development of specialist teaching and education facilities to support the whole community, there will be enhanced opportunities for employment in the education sector.

**Health and Social Care** – West Cumbria's population is forecast to age over the period to 2027 and this will create additional demands and pressures on health and social care programmes. There will be additional job opportunities arising in the health and caring professions as a result of these important changes to the population structure.

**Transport and Distribution** – investment in the transport infrastructure of the area will underpin business investment and job creation. Investment in assets such as the Port of Workington, which provides an international gateway to West Cumbria for freight, could provide a catalyst for growth of the logistics sector in the area, along with associated job opportunities.

**Agriculture and Forestry** – one of West Cumbria's most valuable resources is its rich and productive landscape. Food security is an issue of growing national significance and the capacity of West Cumbria to continue to supply food resources in the future will be a valuable commodity. Alongside this trend, with the growing importance of the low carbon agenda, there is an opportunity to harness West Cumbria's land, water and forest resources to help to power low carbon energy systems.

### Responding to the Opportunity

Key to realising the investment and sector specific opportunities will be recognising the need to act now and act decisively. The momentum established in the short term will create a strong foundation from which to genuinely enhance the economy of West Cumbria making it more resilient to the challenges that lie ahead and better able to position itself in relation to areas of competitive advantage in the future.



# THE STRATEGY



# 4 THE STRATEGY

The Blueprint identifies the transformational activities which will enable West Cumbria to become more economically diverse and resilient for the benefit of the whole community. It will enable a positive local impact for the investment in nuclear new build and decommissioning as well as support for our most dynamic and growth oriented businesses to diversify into new markets, distinguishing themselves through innovation.

In doing so, four objectives have been identified. They provide a proposed framework for devising, supporting and implementing specific projects as well as lobbying for the necessary resources from private and public sector partners to assist in delivery. The objectives are as follows:

**Objective 1:** Optimising Worldwide Nuclear Investment and Building on our Expertise

**Objective 2:** Business Expansion and Diversification

**Objective 3:** Providing a Supporting Physical Infrastructure

**Objective 4:** Growing the Asset Base

Each of these objectives is mutually reinforcing and will mean that West Cumbria becomes an even more competitive place to do business. Common to all of these objectives is also the continued need to invest in the skills of our workforce (and in particular young people) to ensure that businesses can benefit from access to expertise and that local people can access job opportunities.

Each of the objectives is described in further detail below.

**Objective 1: Optimising Worldwide Nuclear Investment and Building on our Expertise**

We need to support projects and investments that lead to a positive impact from the substantial investment in decommissioning, and potentially new build, that is planned in the near future.

At the heart of this approach will be work to ensure that knowledge and innovation flows from the major corporate and institutional players in West Cumbria to the supply chain of local firms. This will embed knowledge and skills within our businesses which can help to make them even more competitive in the future. We will also ensure that the socio-economic commitments of partners in the nuclear sector are given appropriate weight in investment and procurement decisions.

Delivering against this objective will also involve supporting our businesses in accessing contract opportunities associated with new build and decommissioning activities. We will work with our private sector partners to maximise the opportunities for use of local companies, labour, for skills development and lifelong learning as an essential component of the legacy. We will engage and work with companies in the new build/ decommissioning supply chain to ensure that the economic impact of their activities is maximised locally – linked to corporate the social responsibility agendas of the major plc companies that will be investing in the area.

In the longer term this will involve close working with the supply chain to optimise business and employment retention in the post construction phase of new build and decommissioning activity. This will grow the overall size and resilience of West Cumbria's business base over time.

## Realising Objective 1



## Objective 2: Business Expansion and Diversification

We know that our economy is currently too dependent on activities related to or supplying the civil nuclear sector and while this sector will provide significant economic growth for the next decade to a peak in 2022/2023, after this time its economic impacts will diminish. We will start to prepare for these changes now. We will create an environment in West Cumbria in which innovation is openly encouraged and supported. This will seek to realise the links between our research establishments, sector strengths, R&D capacity and skilled workforce.

We will support our most dynamic and growth oriented businesses and people to diversify into new markets, based on their existing skills, specialisms and experience. This will build on existing strengths and competitive advantages in sectors and clusters (eg. high tech manufacturing, precision engineering sectors, materials security etc.) with a focus on diversification through innovation. We will focus on driving up the volume and value of export activity to domestic and global markets, recognising the declining market opportunities post 2026 in the civil nuclear sector in West Cumbria.

This will involve a blend of research and development activity, supporting business expansion through the availability of finance, business support and promotional activity.

We will continue to support a diverse range of low carbon energy and Clean Tech investments, recognising the economic potential of our land based and marine environments. All of this activity will be delivered alongside skills and training support for our workforce to help them to access job opportunities as they are created.

The outcome of this will be a more diverse and resilient business base that will provide ongoing job opportunities for local residents after the investment in nuclear new build and decommissioning peaks and declines. Through an open innovation system and an environment in which business start up, incubation and growth is nurtured, we will create an even more dynamic business structure for the future.

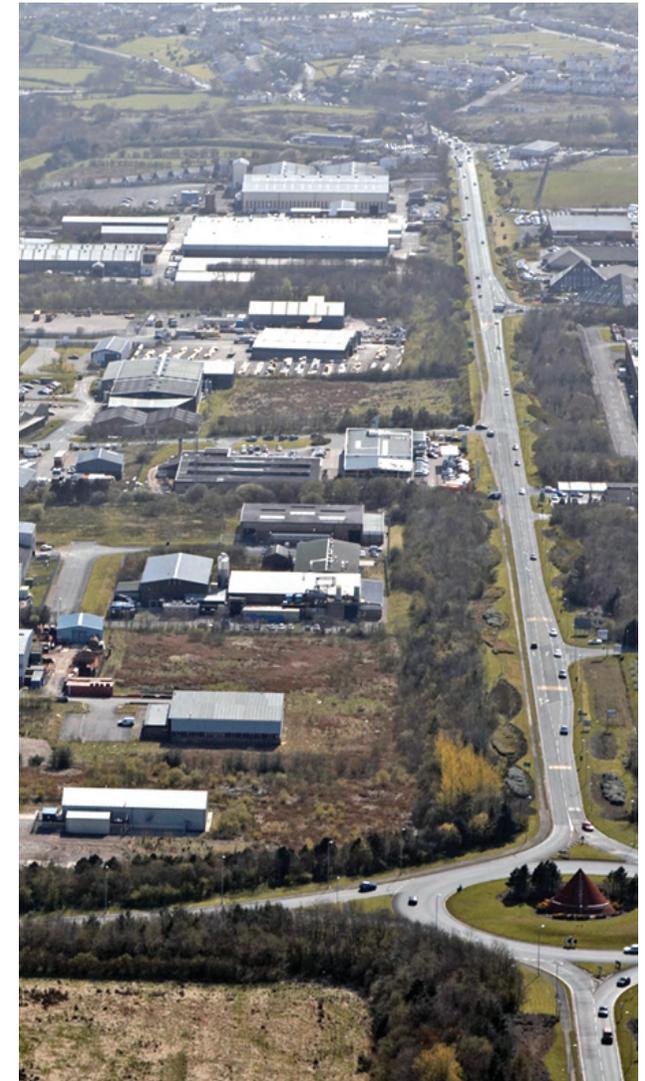
### Objective 3: Providing Supporting Physical Infrastructure

We recognise that we need to support investment in key pieces of infrastructure that are a prerequisite of attracting and retaining business investment. This will include upgrades to key roads, the coastal rail line, the Port of Workington, grid and essential broadband infrastructure. Our focus on delivering improvements to key infrastructure will ensure that businesses can access a highly skilled and motivated labour force easily and that access to customer markets and supply chain industries is optimised.

Investment will enable our residents to access employment opportunities within the area and to make low carbon travel choices. In the long term improvement to the areas transport infrastructure will serve to reinforce the appeal of West Cumbria as a place to live.

### Objective 4: Growing the Asset Base of West Cumbria

We will support commercial investment in our town centres, focusing initially on opportunities to “spin out” the economic benefits of the substantial investment in decommissioning/ nuclear new build to support the growth and regeneration of our key town centres. We will support the continuing development of business clustering in high technology sectors and manufacturing activities, with a particular focus on improving the quality and range of our portfolio of key employment sites which are served by a competitive infrastructure for business. We will encourage and support activities which lead to the economic potential of the coastline and our harbours and marinas being fully realised. We recognise that we will need to use our land and property assets intelligently to achieve these objectives, as well as working in partnership with private sector investors and developers.



## The Energy Coast Innovation Zone (business innovation zone)

We will establish a Business Innovation Zone within West Cumbria in order to implement this strategy.

### *What is it?*

The Innovation Zone will broadly cover the area in which the major research, business, labour force and employment assets of the area are located. This will act as a spatial focus for investment to support businesses, for R&D activity, for investment in business infrastructure (including pockets of superfast broadband), knowledge transfer and delivery of skills and training linked to business requirements.

This zone will cover a broad area spanning the key town centres of Whitehaven and Workington, the Port of Workington, Lillyhall, Westlakes Science and Technology Park, the Sellafield site, the Moorside (NuGen) site and the Low Level Waste Repository near Drigg. Investment in this area will benefit a much wider area and will be accessible to the whole community of West Cumbria. This will be a flexible zone, and will not have “hard and fast” boundaries that prevent businesses from accessing the information and support that they need to succeed.

We will seek formal Central Government recognition and a status for this zone on the basis of the scale of employment growth that is achievable here, the enhanced Gross Value Added output that can be delivered and the investment and innovation value that will be created.

We will use our assets and work in partnership with private sector partners to accelerate delivery within the Energy Coast Innovation Zone for the benefit of the whole of West Cumbria.

### *Why is the Innovation Zone needed?*

The local economy of West Cumbria functions over a wide geographical area due to the dispersed nature of our towns and businesses both within rural and urban areas. This not only makes us distinct from cities and large urban areas, but is also a source of our competitive advantage. We are not burdened by the negative aspects of big city life including congestion, prohibitively high land values and affordability concerns. There is space for businesses to grow and develop, and for people to access high quality homes in outstanding environments.

Our dispersed but connected economy and many of our sources of competitive advantage (including research establishments, business clusters, skilled labour force) are all located within an area that broadly stretches from Workington in the North along the coast and down to the Sellafield site in the south.

Businesses within this area draw their labour force from a wider area of West Cumbria and as such the economic importance of this area is significant in employment terms.

Despite having many of the ingredients for economic success within this broad area, the connections between these elements are not yet fully developed and that is what the Innovation Zone seeks to address. For example, our world class research facility could be even better connected to industry, creating the conditions in which innovation flourishes. Access by local firms to the knowledge and innovation associated with Sellafield and its activities could be improved, leading to greater flow of innovations to businesses. Contract opportunities associated with the substantial investment in the nuclear sector could become even more accessible to our small and medium sized companies who often struggle to compete. Our businesses could be better supported throughout the process of innovating products, proving them and getting them to market. Our people could be better equipped and readily able to access new jobs as they are created.

The Energy Coast Innovation Zone is all about making these connections and, critically, providing an environment which enables such connections to occur naturally.

### *How will it work?*

The diagram over the page illustrates how research, knowledge, businesses, infrastructure and physical assets will all combine and connect to one another in the Energy Coast Innovation Zone.

The innovation process within the Innovation Zone will start with applied "Research" activity being undertaken with a range of institutions and universities. Within the Innovation Zone, there will be focused action to open up the research process and dissemination of research findings to local businesses and SMEs. As applied research is disseminated to the business community, firms will also be supported through the "R&D and Demonstration" stages of product/ service development. Venture capital, bank finance and public sector funding will all combine at this critical stage of the business innovation process to assist more businesses in succeeding.

A simplified "Business Support" programme will be available to all companies in West Cumbria, but with a specific focus on those trialling innovative products and processes and looking to commercialise their innovations. Support will be available to help businesses to access and enter customer "Markets", with a particular focus on accessing export markets as well as the local contract opportunities associated with the nuclear sector.



At the same time, more will be done to promote the Innovation Zone as a commercial investment location globally, helping to secure inward investment and enhanced commercial and employment opportunities.

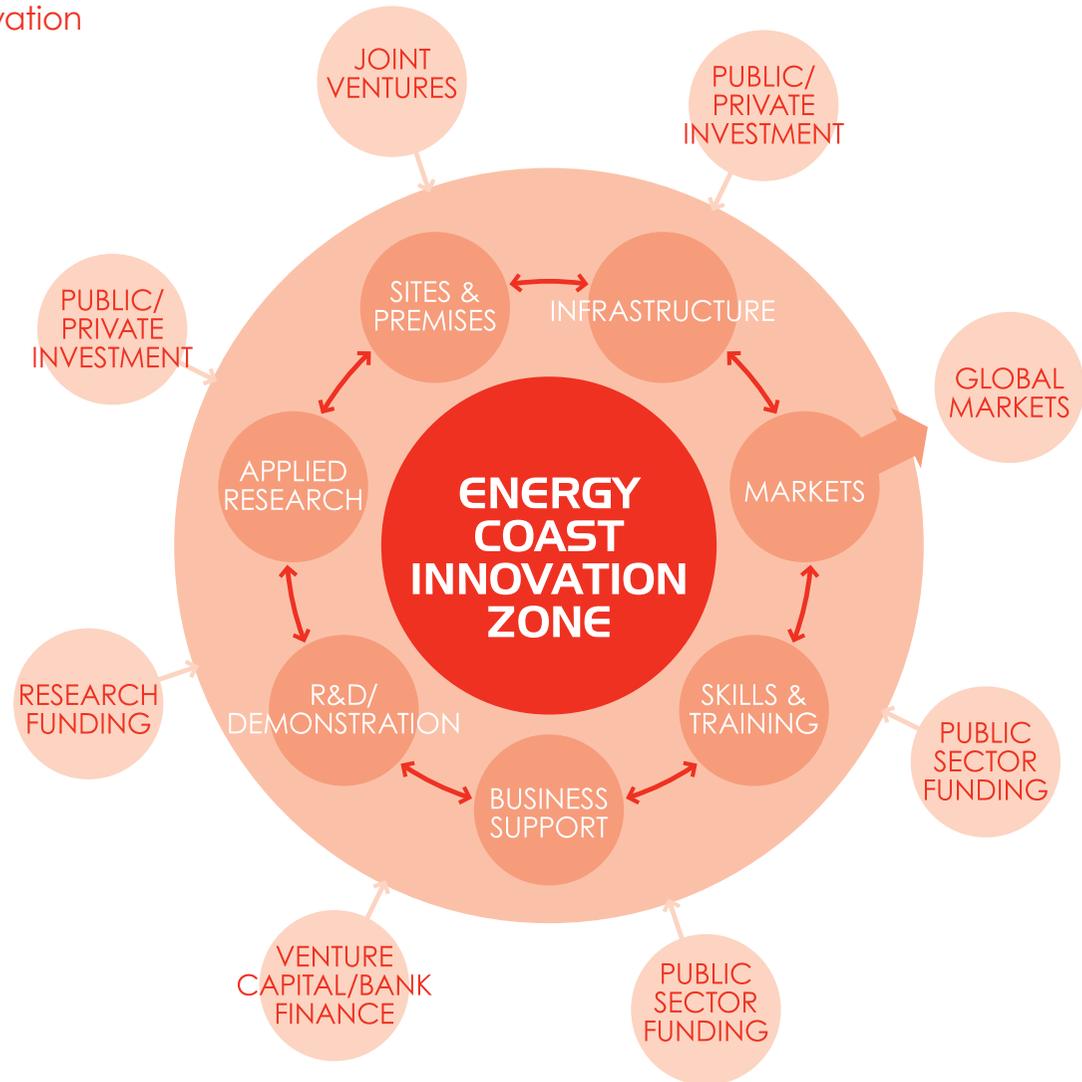
This will help to bring global opportunities to West Cumbria and better connect local businesses with external markets and clients.

Alongside business support, investment will be made in "Training and Skills" to ensure that the workforce remains a competitive feature of the area. Our people will be better connected to the training and work opportunities arising from the substantial investment that is planned in the nuclear sector.

Investment in the Infrastructure of the Innovation Zone will ensure that it is easy to "make the connections" between businesses, research establishments, major employers, employees and service providers. Investments in the broadband, the grid, the public transport and road infrastructure will strengthen the links between areas within the Innovation Zone as well as making it easier to access from a wider area.

In tandem with these improvements, a complete portfolio of high quality Sites and Premises will be available for business, spanning town centres through to specialist provision at Westlakes, Lillyhall and the Port of Workington.

### How the Innovation Zone will work



1: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority  
2: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority



In summary the Innovation Zone is designed to create an environment where it is easy for business to gain access to knowledge, research, innovation, expertise, contracts, finance and business support. It is a place where it is easy for people to get to the Innovation Zone and to move around it, and people are better equipped to access jobs as they are created in the local area. Creating this environment will foster a more enterprising culture and will help to ensure West Cumbria's economic resilience in the future.





**DELIVERY**

## 5 DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

1: Image supplied courtesy of the  
National Nuclear Laboratory

In this section, we set out our most important proposals for delivery. These are the major projects and programmes which together will deliver the Innovation Zone and lead to a transformation of our economy.

The Blueprint covers a period to 2027, however many of the actions recommended here need to happen in the short to medium term in order for the full benefits of investment to be captured and to prepare our business to access contract opportunities arising, as well as preparing for a future which is less reliant on the nuclear sector.

Moving forward the Blueprint will require West Cumbrian communities and leadership think differently about what constitutes economic development and collaboration.

The four objectives which underpin the Blueprint are interrelated and must be approached systematically. Failure to move forward in one objective impacts upon the prospects for delivery of the others. Delivery will require a “joint venture” approach involving a wide range of collaborators.



Through collaboration we will embrace the “Energy Coast” identity as a whole as well as acknowledge that local success benefits the entire area and vice versa. The effectiveness of this Blueprint will be determined by the extent to which local public and private leaders and key stakeholders work together to deliver the programmes as a whole. External marketing to promote the Innovation Zone as an investment destination for companies and entrepreneurs within the identified sectors and areas of opportunity must be accompanied by the creation of an Energy Coast identity in the institutions and communities of the area itself.

The process of securing delivery will include the relationship-building and leadership networking that is essential to a successful economic place, bringing together diverse communities and constituencies under the “Energy Coast” banner.

## Applied Research

### Research Commercialisation Programme –

The Energy Coast Campus and the National Nuclear Laboratory together provide a global centre of expertise and a potential source of competitive advantage for West Cumbria. The role and specialism of each facility is highlighted below.

The National Nuclear Laboratory’s (NNL) Central Laboratory, located at Sellafield, is a focal point for nuclear experimental programmes and analytical services. It supports research programmes in reactor operation and new build facilities, fuel processing, decommissioning and clean up programmes. NNL’s Central Laboratory offers unique research facilities including a suite of “High Active Cells” offering discrete working areas as well as MOX Fuel Development Laboratories.

The Dalton Institute Cumbria, located at Westlakes Science and Technology Park provides specialist research into:

- Radiation chemistry, physics and radiation damage to materials
- Nuclear engineering decommissioning
- The management of radioactive waste
- The facilities available at the Dalton Institute enable researchers to simulate, analyse and inspect equipment for the examination irradiated chemicals and materials.

Together these institutions provide “flagship” research facilities in a UK and global context.

We will support the development of a research commercialisation process involving NNL and the Dalton Institute along with other academic partners that are not yet present in West Cumbria.

The purpose of this research commercialisation project will be to connect research activity with businesses and to encourage a process of commercialisation of knowledge. This will ensure that as technology and process innovation occurs within these organisations, local companies will have access to information and will effectively be “technology ready”.

We appreciate that the applied research being undertaken in these institutions may have applications for non-nuclear industries, and will seek to ensure that companies outside the sector can maximise commercialisation of research.

**Developing Applied Research Links** - we also recognise that business innovation will not only be driven by our networks in West Cumbria and there is a need to connect our businesses with the UK’s established centres of excellence. We will support West Cumbria businesses and research/ HEIs in contributing to the following national sector activities: high value manufacturing and renewable energy research/ commercialisation, both of which play to the competitive advantages of the area. We will provide opportunities for knowledge transfer arising from participation in UK wide Technology Innovation Centres.

## R&D / Demonstration

**Demonstration of New Nuclear Technology Programme** – we will work with our academic partners at the NNL and Dalton Institute Cumbria to demonstrate the latest technological innovation in the civil nuclear sector including but not limited to reactor prototypes and new alternative fuel reactor technologies. The combination of large scale laboratory, analytical and modelling facilities available within West Cumbria, combined with the applied skills and expertise available locally in the radiation sciences are unique features of the area. We will look to establish West Cumbria's facilities as "show case" facilities for the demonstration and promotion of new nuclear technologies.

**Business R&D Programme** - linked to the Applied Research strand of the strategy, we will offer support to businesses looking to develop product/ service research and development activities. The combination of simulation, modelling, analytical and engineering facilities available locally provides a platform for businesses looking to develop products and services. Access to these facilities, technical experts as well as the necessary financial resources to develop R&D programmes will be at the forefront of our support to innovating businesses in West Cumbria. We also recognise that R&D is being undertaken by large companies in West Cumbria outside the nuclear and energy sectors and the associated potential for commercialisation and transfer of some of their non-core technologies.

**Low Carbon Energy Benefits Programme** - development of a programme of exemplar projects which initially showcase: community and business based energy systems in practice in the urban area and a rural equivalent; and development of an infrastructure project for plug in hybrid electric vehicles to demonstrate their use in practice in West Cumbria. Associated business support activity to ensure uptake of opportunities by local manufacturing businesses and domestic properties. Early investments will focus on demonstrating the commercial and domestic benefits of low carbon energy systems with a view to rolling out a wider range of businesses and neighbourhoods in the medium term.



## Enterprise Culture

Enterprise drives economic development. It happens in some (not all) small business start-ups, and in businesses of all sizes, in the public sector, and in third sector and community organisations, where the organisational culture allows it and supports it. Enterprise is having the confidence to try new ideas, and make innovations happen. It is closely linked to aspiration. An innovation-driven economy needs a networked society with high levels of interaction and co-operation (social capital) where people have the knowledge, creativity and confidence to try something new.

We will support measures that encourage a culture of enterprise among West Cumbria's residents, workforce and businesses. This will involve providing people with the information, skills, support and confidence to be entrepreneurial and to start their own businesses. The following actions will stimulate a culture of enterprise.

**Enterprising Communities** - West Cumbria has a wealth of community based organisations, from sports clubs to choral groups to school governing bodies, which are often not thought of as enterprises, but where entrepreneurial activity nevertheless takes place. Often, these are substantial businesses in their own right, where the leaders have acquired skills and expertise on a par with those of conventional businesses.



There is the potential to tap into this enterprising behaviour in our community organisations and build on it to develop community-based enterprise.

**Enterprising Minds** - Enterprise is a can-do mindset; it cannot be trained, but it can be nurtured. We will support our schools in developing adventure learning, our higher education establishments in nurturing intellectual curiosity, and our life-long learning providers in creating opportunities to learn at whatever age. We will support cultural activities and organisations which foster the creativity on which innovation depends.

**Enterprise Incubation** - Anyone can invent something new, with access to the facilities to turn ideas and concepts into reality. We will make available innovation laboratories where everyone of whatever age and background, from schoolchildren to business people to retired people, can turn their ideas and concepts into reality, and new products can be developed by businesses (of all sizes) and individuals. They will be linked to lifelong learning networks, incubation facilities, and knowledge transfer networks through our Higher Education and Research establishments.

Innovators need access to finance to become entrepreneurs. We will look to develop venture capital finance involving equity funds at both regional and national levels to provide seed and gap capital to commercialise innovations.

**Enterprise Coaching and Business Mentors** – having access to a business mentor who has “done it before” is an effective way of providing support to individuals starting a company, or looking to expand or diversify. Mentors can help provide a “sounding board” for ideas, as well as providing a perspective on business establishment and development. We will use the skills and understanding of successful entrepreneurs in the area, across a range of sectors, to provide coaching and mentoring to support people with ideas to work these ideas up to become successful innovations. We will build on the existing enterprise coaching programmes and link them to facilities for business incubation.

These actions will work alongside and complement the other actions included in the Blueprint, ensuring that start up businesses and entrepreneurs have access to finance, research and innovation, premises, ongoing business support and access to professional networks.

## Business Support

**Single West Cumbria Business Support Programme** – West Cumbria is poised to grow its employment base in a number of diverse sectors. Businesses within these sectors span existing companies, social enterprises, inward investors and potential joint venture arrangements. Helping business to succeed in a diverse range of sectors requires a better co-ordinated and easy to use business support programme.

Business support delivery is currently spread across a large number of organisations and is difficult for businesses to navigate. We will put in place a Single West Cumbria Business Support Programme to ensure ease of access to support. This service will operate across the local authority boundaries and will help businesses to expand into new markets and territories.

**Target Sector Business Support** - there is an opportunity to investigate specific business support services linked to the key sectors that have been identified. There is also an opportunity to work with high growth potential firms within these sectors to ensure access to research and to assist with the commercialisation of R&D activity emanating from the National Nuclear Laboratory, the Dalton Institute Cumbria and the UK network of Technology and Innovation Centres.

Specifically in relation to companies looking to access opportunities in the decommissioning and nuclear sectors there are opportunities to:

- Deliver sector specific training for companies operating within the sector or looking to enter it;
- Arrange access to laboratory and research facilities for companies operating within these sectors;

- Provide access to sector based experts who can provide technical and engineering support to businesses during the R&D and demonstration stage;
- Encourage business networks to form to share knowledge and innovation;
- Provide access to R&D funding;
- Identify opportunities for technology transfer/commercialisation of opportunities and
- Broker specialist training and professional development activities to enable businesses to more effectively compete and trade in these sectors.

### Access to Markets

**Local Business Opportunities Programme** – we will work with commissioning partners in the nuclear sector to embed local procurement mechanisms into all contracts tendered where practical and achievable. This will involve a specific focus on ensuring that SMEs can access contract opportunities.

We will also work directly with the principal partners in the supply chain that are appointed to ensure that their purchasing and contracting decisions also benefit local firms.

We will work with decommissioning and new build partners to ensure that there are appropriate “knowledge transfer” arrangements in place to ensure that local businesses in the supply chain benefit from wider R&D activity and innovation. This programme of actions will help to secure and safeguard local employment in supporting sectors of the economy and will directly benefit local people.

**Decommissioning Export Markets Programme** – the planned investment in decommissioning gives West Cumbria a real source of competitive advantage. Our businesses and people have unrivalled expertise in decontamination and decommissioning as well as expertise in relation to the management and storage of nuclear waste. There is an unrealised commercial value in selling these expertise in relation to supporting decommissioning overseas.

We will specifically work with and support companies looking to access opportunities to export their skills, expertise and services. In doing so we will draw upon the resources and support available through UK Trade and Investment.

### Connecting with Global Markets Programme –

the unique commercial, scientific and technical knowledge that many of our businesses hold provides a clear source of competitive advantage, but this is not universally traded upon outside West Cumbria.

We will specifically work with other dynamic businesses looking to access global customer markets to provide advice and support, working alongside the UK Trade and Investment team.

### Education, Skills and Training

The Blueprint seeks to develop a culture of enterprise. It also focuses attention on a small number of sectors in which West Cumbria has competitive and comparative advantages. Key to ensuring these aims is providing excellent local education facilities as well as specialist teaching and training facilities linked to companies that are growing, major employers and investors.

Developing excellent schools will not only help to attract and retain families within West Cumbria but will also, alongside other measures contained in the Blueprint, help to equip young people for work and encourage an enterprise culture.

This local education infrastructure will also need to be complemented by access to skills and training opportunities for adults and those entering the workforce for the first time.



This should not only help equip people with the skills and experiences that they need to access job opportunities but also provide a stimulus for an enterprising culture.

This will provide an opportunity for engaging those who are furthest from the labour market and those who have been marginalised by the way in which the economy has developed over recent decades.

**Development of state of the art education, training and research facilities to support major nuclear and low carbon projects** - We will work with public and private sector partners in order to deliver a local education infrastructure which provides a high quality learning environment. We will secure the development of new training and research facilities to ensure that we are able locally to support people and businesses to gain maximum benefit from the key business sectors for West Cumbria. Such facilities should include a Reactor Construction Simulator and specialist welding facilities.

**Work Opportunities Programme** – We will develop and deliver a programme of support to help people to access work opportunities that will be created in both the key sectors and the other supporting sectors of the economy which will be growing in tandem.

This programme will look to match skill and experience requirements of prospective employers with support to develop essential skills and work readiness as well as sign posting people to appropriate skills development and training opportunities to make them more competitive in the labour market. This programme will be specifically targeted to benefit people living in the areas where workforce exclusion is highest and where the process of economic change has wrought the highest levels of unemployment in the past.

**High Growth Business Skills Audit** – access to the right skills and professional expertise is a recognised barrier to business growth. We will focus on our highest growth potential business and work with them to map out their skill requirements for business growth and expansion. This will be a precursor to working with education and skills providers to ensure alignment between business demand and labour supply.

**Enhanced Training Programme** - specifically linked to existing businesses and targeting new investors accessing contracts through decommissioning and new build activity. The Programme will be designed to ensure that the next generation of workforce benefits directly from planned investment in the area, gains commercial experience and are employable to a wide range of local businesses in the long term.



1: Picture courtesy of  
Britain's Energy Coast



## Infrastructure

In moving to a low carbon economy, with thriving clean-tech industries and low carbon energy systems there is a need to provide for a range of supporting infrastructure which enables low carbon business choices to be made and sustainable lifestyles to be lived. This will involve investing to ensure that goods and services can be traded using wherever possible low carbon means of transport, that it is possible to travel around West Cumbria by a range of public transport, walking and cycling, and that West Cumbria is globally connected via high speed broadband.

These major investment projects in the area's infrastructure will ensure future competitiveness for West Cumbria. In addition there will be considerable infrastructure improvements required to accommodate major investment projects such as nuclear new build, both in the short and medium term.

If Nuclear New Build is to go ahead there will be transport impacts for people travelling to and from work and for freight movement to and from the construction site. These will impact upon the daily lives of people living in West Cumbria. The scope and scale of these impacts and the improvements and investment necessary to accommodate them will become clearer as the detail of the Nuclear New Build programme emerges. Key elements of this anticipated transport demand which need to be planned for include:

- Travel to work
- Access to goods and services
- Freight movements
- Network resilience

Infrastructure requirements are likely to include access improvements (port, rail, road), schools, healthcare and community facilities as well as an appropriate stock of housing linked to the likely economic demands arising from investment.

Many of these improvements will be out with the existing investment plans of public sector partners, and the private sector will play an important role, alongside the public sector, in funding and delivering the necessary infrastructure improvements linked to specific developments.

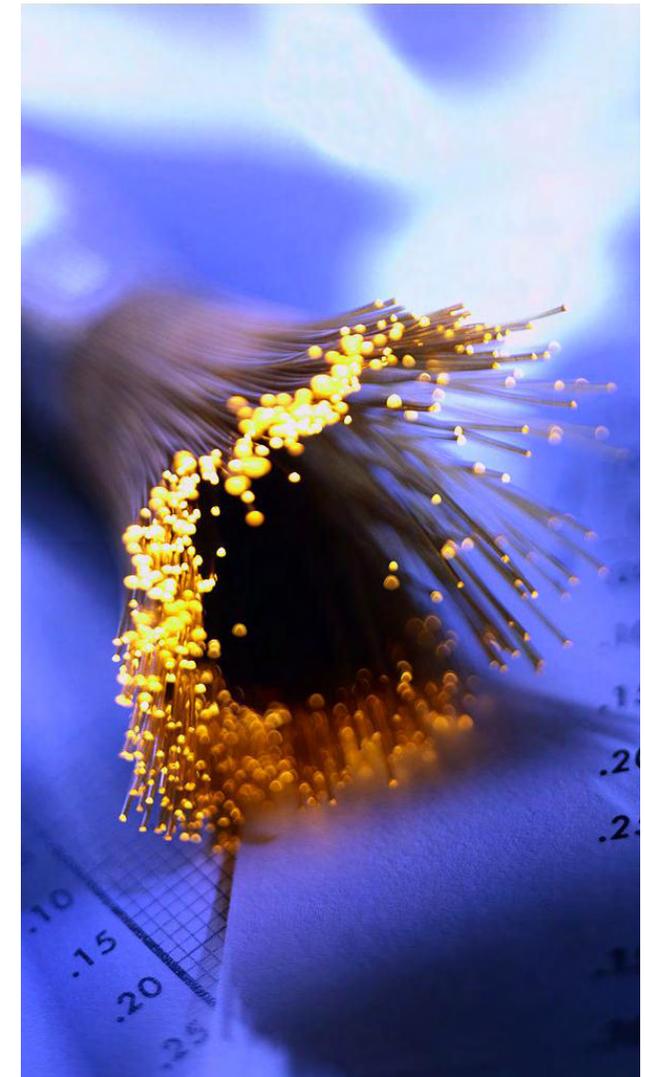
**Sustainable Access Network** – A package of investment is required to enhance the passenger rail service (eg. Frequency, quality of rolling stock) and delivery of transport “hubs” in key town centres. Improved access to the rail network by scheduled public transport, bike, foot and by car is needed. This should include improved bus facilities in town centres and at railway stations, attractive and secure cycle parking and convenient, safe and attractive walking routes that connect town centres, residential areas and railway station’.

This will better connect local residents with the areas which will provide jobs in the future as well as making low carbon transport attractive as an alternative to car. The desired increase in visitors to the area will have impacts on the transport network including roads, public transport, cycling and walking routes.

We will work closely with transport operators to encourage more visitor journeys to be made by sustainable modes’. We will also look to join up our thinking in terms of procuring from local businesses as we secure improvements to the transport network, and incorporating adoption of Clean Tech innovations wherever practical.

**Superfast Broadband** – Delivering superfast broadband is essential to West Cumbria’s competitiveness as a business location in the future. Within the Innovation Zone we will work towards delivering superfast broadband nodes related to the key business locations in the Town Centres, at Lillyhall and Westlakes.

**Enhanced Grid Connection** - The National Grid is in the process of developing its Northwest Coast Connections Project which will create a 400kV grid transmission line linking West Cumbria enabling it to contribute to the nations supply of electricity. Alongside the transmission line the National Grid also plans to invest in a programme of improvements to the existing 132KV line.



Beyond direct job creation this investment will represent a significant asset to both existing businesses in the area, serving their existing and future power needs but also represents a potential 'competitive advantage' to energy hungry businesses looking for energy security, a factor which is likely to become increasingly important to manufacturers and technology firms. Delivery of improvements to the existing 132KV line is therefore essential to the future competitiveness of the area.



The latent potential of West Cumbria to generate low carbon energy heightens the importance of the grid connection, enabling locally generated power to be distributed to the national grid.

**Access for Business Project –** We will seek to secure an investment package which will deliver transport infrastructure to serve the Innovation Zone and connect it to the wider area. This will include improvements to facilitate development of the Port of Workington. We will also support targeted investment in the heavy rail infrastructure (specifically improvements to tracking) to enable freight movement from West Cumbria businesses to customer markets. In recognition of the growing international trade links that West Cumbria has, Carlisle Airport will increasingly become a key international gateway to the area.

Freight services and the potential for the expansion of passenger services will be supported in the context of a competitive transport infrastructure for local businesses and inward investors. We will therefore lobby for the expansion of the airport.

Investment in the following priority improvements is recommended:

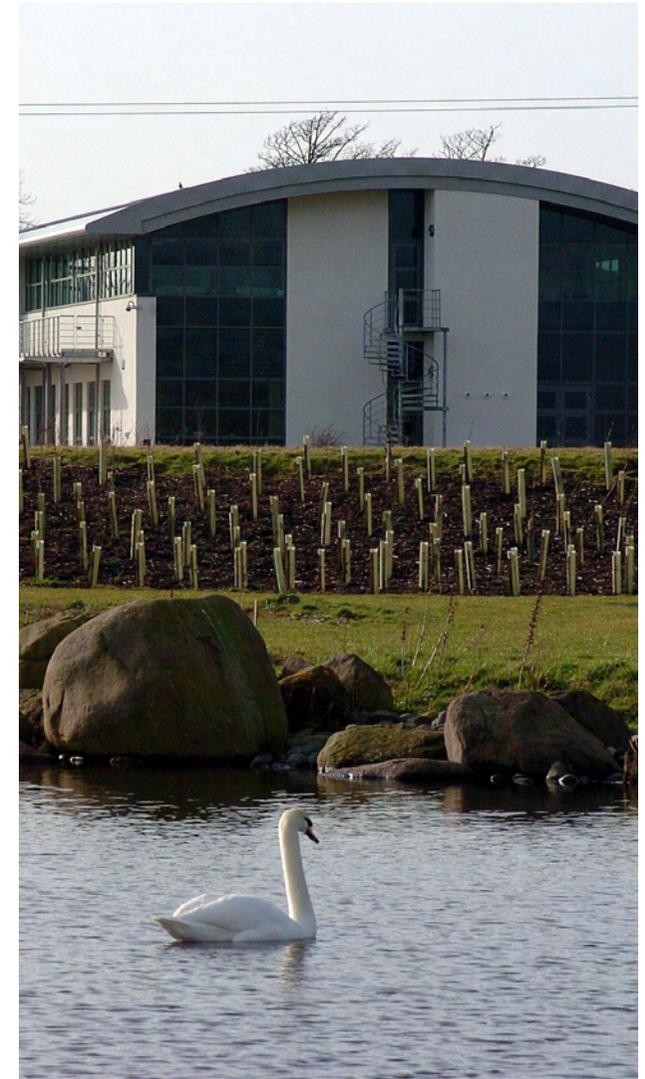
- **Access to the Port of Workington –** Infrastructure improvements are required to make the Port of Workington an international gateway to West Cumbria. These may include a second access to the Port and promoting development of employment land surrounding the Port. The Port will also benefit from improvements to better connect it to the wider transport network. Key among these is delivery of the Workington Southern Link which could provide a high quality and unconstrained access route to the Port.
- **Whitehaven Eastern Relief Road –** Ensuring efficient movement of goods and workforce around West Cumbria is important in ensuring that it is a competitive place to do business. The anticipated growth of Whitehaven alongside increased traffic movements linked to development of large employment sites and Sellafield will put further stress on the A595 route through Whitehaven. This could be further compounded depending on the location of potential temporary worker accommodation linked with nuclear new build. The delivery of the relief road could serve to alleviate pressure on existing road network and ensure that it is easy for businesses users, residents and visitors to move around West Cumbria. Development of the relief road could also be linked to park and ride opportunities and further development at Westlakes Science and Technology Park.

- **Improvements to the A595 / A5086** – The LTP and local transport priorities identify investment in these corridors as important priorities. These road corridors are key in connecting the Port of Workington to the main settlements and Sellafield. In addition they also form an important role in improving access for visitors from the Lake District into West Cumbria.
- **Improved access to the Railway** - maximise the use of the railway, improved access to the rail network is needed. This could involve improvements to scheduled public transport, bike, foot and car connections. This could also include improved bus facilities in town centres and at railway stations, attractive and secure cycle parking and convenient, safe and attractive walking routes that connect town centres, residential areas and railway stations. This is consistent with the promotion of sustainable access. Track and signalling infrastructure improvements are also needed to the rail corridor between the Port of Workington and Sellafield to remove pinch points and to enable more trains to run.

## Sites and Premises

**A Commercial Kick Start Project** – Supporting the development of new commercial office space in the principal Town Centres of Whitehaven and Workington in time to accommodate occupier demand arising from decommissioning and new build. The initial phase of development will be high quality and designed to provide confidence to subsequent private investors and inward investors locating in West Cumbria to access contract opportunities. There is a narrow “window of opportunity” to ensure that a supply of commercial property is available in the most sustainable locations and that appropriate supporting infrastructure is in place, relative to the timing of an investment decision for new build nuclear and the procurement of partners to deliver the construction phase.

**Continued Focus on Lillyhall and Westlakes Science and Technology Park as Prime Business Locations** – Outside the key town centres of Whitehaven and Workington, Lillyhall is a prime employment location for inward investors and large scale occupier requirements that cannot be accommodated centrally, with specific reference to opportunities in advanced manufacturing and Clean Tech industries. Due to the scale of the site and availability of land, there is potential to establish a cluster of industries, to facilitate networking and knowledge transfer.



Westlakes Science and Technology Park is also a prestigious business location and will appeal to knowledge based businesses looking for laboratory, R&D, studio and offices and light industrial space. Westlakes provides a portfolio of development plot opportunities within the existing Science and Technology Park site and the potential for expansion.

**Nuclear Sites Redevelopment Opportunities** – in the longer term we will pursue redevelopment opportunities arising from decommissioning of the licensed Sellafield site as well as short/medium term opportunities on sites adjoining it, in order to accommodate potential new energy missions and their supporting infrastructure.

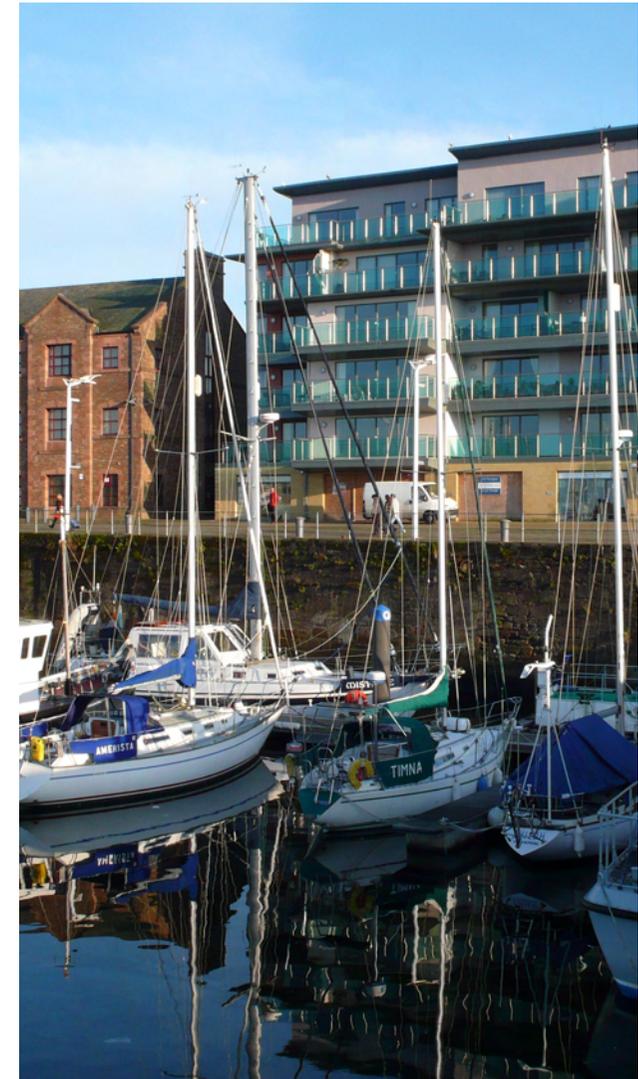
**A Harbour and Coastal Development Programme** – the development potential of our historic harbours for tourism, residential, business and low carbon energy uses has yet to be fully realised. They complement the outdoor appeal of the Lake District National Park's visitor offer and West Cumbria's emerging position as the "adventure capital" of the sub region. We will support economic development projects related to the harbour and coastal areas which yield significant economic outputs and contribute to the "legacy" and "diversification/innovation" goals of the Blueprint.

**Social Infrastructure Investment** – The Blueprint will deliver thousands of new jobs across a range of sectors. In addition, the transition will require investment in new build infrastructure, notably in nuclear power. People will move to West Cumbria, some permanently, some temporary, including students and researchers as well as construction workers.

Investment in the social infrastructure of the area will be required, in terms of housing, schools, and health facilities, but also in the cultural facilities and quality of life that makes Energy Coast a good place to live as well as work and study.

There will be a specific requirement for some permanent accommodation to meet the needs of the workforce at the peak of construction. This offers an opportunity to provide new housing for West Cumbria's residents post the construction phase. We will work with NuGen and the appointed contractor to secure housing investment in the right locations, of appropriate quality and size standards, alongside necessary supporting infrastructure (e.g. education and transport) to meet immediate requirements as well as the long term needs of West Cumbria's residents.

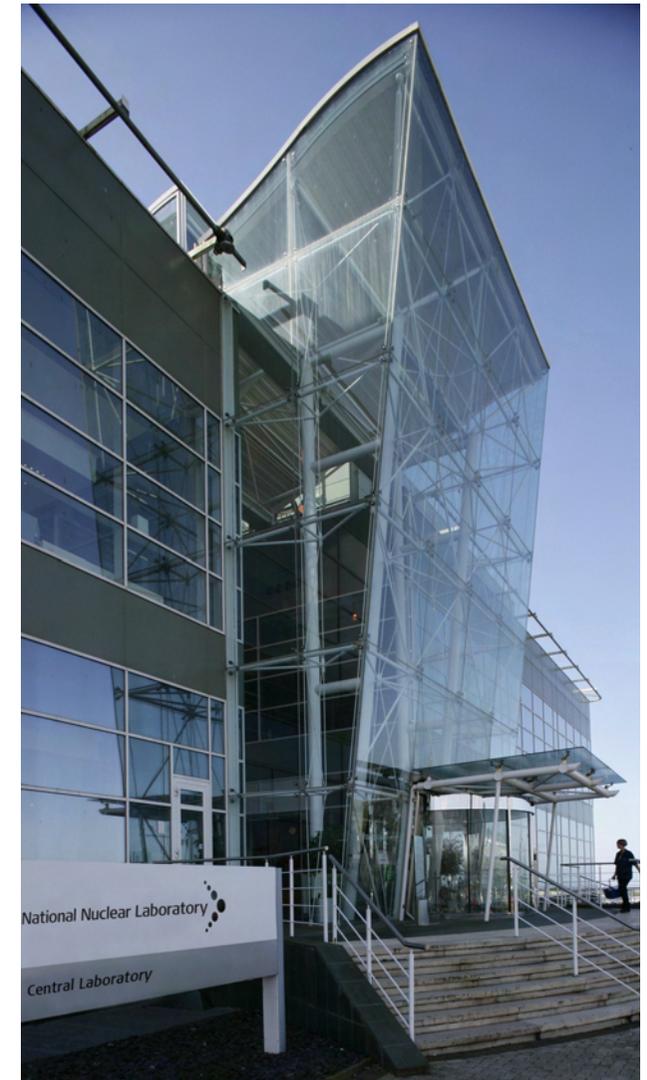
Working with our partners in the public and private sector we will seek to deliver the investment that is required in the areas social infrastructure.



1: Image supplied courtesy of  
the National Nuclear Laboratory

## Summary of Delivery Strategy

<b>Applied Research</b>	<b>R&amp;D Demonstration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Commercialisation</li> <li>• Developing Applied Research Links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration of New Nuclear Tech Programme</li> <li>• Business R&amp;D Programme</li> <li>• Low Carbon Energy Benefits Programme</li> </ul>
<b>Enterprise Culture</b>	<b>Business Support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enterprising Communities</li> <li>• Enterprising Minds</li> <li>• Enterprise Incubation</li> <li>• Enterprise Coaching/ Business Mentors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single West Cumbria Business Support</li> <li>• Target Sector Business Support Package</li> </ul>
<b>Access to Markets</b>	<b>Education, Skills and Training</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Business Opportunities Programme</li> <li>• Decommissioning Export Markets Programme</li> <li>• Connecting with Global Markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of the Art Facilities</li> <li>• Work Opportunities Programme</li> <li>• High Growth Business Skills Audit</li> <li>• Enhanced Training Programme</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Sites and Premises</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Access Package</li> <li>• Superfast Broadband</li> <li>• Enhanced Grid Connection</li> <li>• Access for Business Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Kick Start Project</li> <li>• Focus on Prime Business Locations</li> <li>• Nuclear Sites Redevelopment Opportunities</li> <li>• Harbour and Coastal Development Programme</li> <li>• Social Infrastructure Package</li> </ul>



# NEXT STEPS



## 6 NEXT STEPS

Once agreed, partners will develop a detailed implementation plan which will set out:

- The activities and projects which will contribute towards delivering the transformational actions;
- The scope of each project including timescales, cost, funding source, outputs and the organisations responsible for delivery.
- Critical activities which lie outside of the responsibilities of local partners;
- Those critical actions which will require sources of additional funding to ensure delivery occurs; and
- A branding and marketing strategy to ensure that the Innovation Zone is promoted effectively.

This implementation plan will be updated on an annual basis in order to respond to opportunities and to monitor progress in delivery.



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1: Picture courtesy of GVA



**CONCLUSION**

# 7 CONCLUSION

The Blueprint provides a focus for economic development and a targeted investment in the coastal plain area of West Cumbria. Through its delivery we will capitalise on our strengths, help our businesses to innovate, diversify and grow to ensure that the wider area of West Cumbria is more prosperous and resilient in the future.

The benefits of the Blueprint are substantial. It provides an opportunity to deliver unprecedented investment value and over 3,000 jobs in the next 15 years, as well as increasing our contribution to UK GVA levels. However, these impacts are linked to the “one off” investment in the nuclear sector, the impact of which will diminish beyond 2022/2023. Responding to this challenge, we are also preparing our businesses now to play a leading role in the UK’s emerging Clean Tech industries and advanced manufacturing sectors as well as capitalising on our continued specialist knowledge in the nuclear sector which is a saleable commodity to a global market. This will help to sustain the employment gains that will be achieved by 2022/2023 as well as creating a more diverse business base.

The Blueprint is designed to work from a position of commercial knowledge and the competitive advantage associated with West Cumbria’s high tech and productive economy. We will capture a substantial share of market growth in these dynamic sectors, benefiting not only the local area but also UK plc.

The transformational actions outlined are aimed at impact of investment in the nuclear sector in West Cumbria – fully exploiting the short to medium term opportunities for our businesses and workforce and laying foundations for ongoing business activity and jobs.

Whilst the Blueprint is key in identifying the areas to be targeted in order to optimise the potential for the West Cumbrian Economy the Implementation Plan will be key to agreeing with partners the funding and delivery responsibilities for the plan.

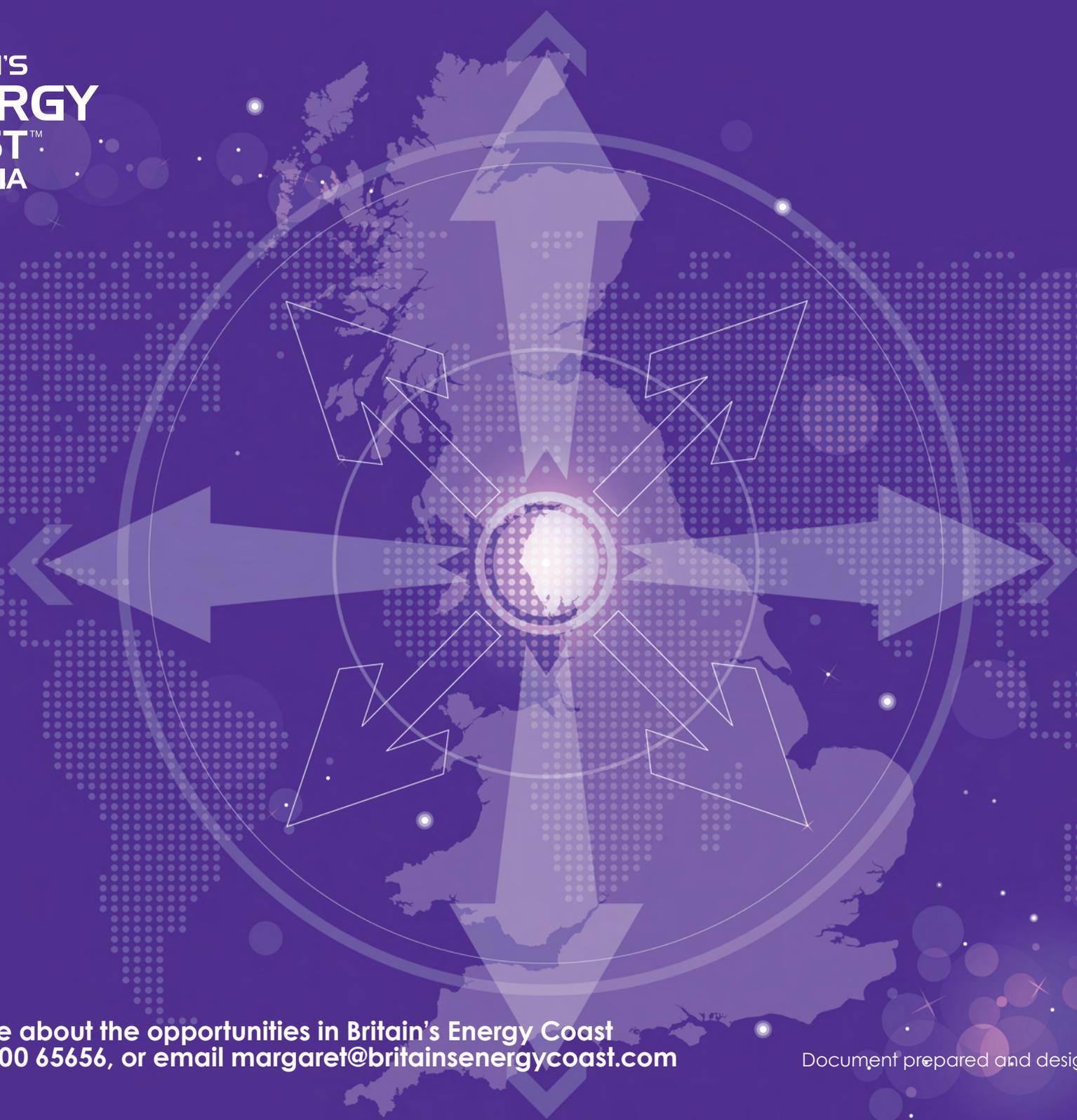
The Blueprint has been developed through consultation with local partners, business leaders and the community. By working together in partnership with local and Central Government we can deliver these benefits and secure a prosperous future for West Cumbria.



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1: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority  
2: Picture courtesy of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority



To find out more about the opportunities in Britain's Energy Coast  
please call 01900 65656, or email [margaret@britainsenergycoast.com](mailto:margaret@britainsenergycoast.com)

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