

Economic Opportunities Framework Brief Overview

Liverpool City Region

A FAIRER, STRONGER, CLEANER
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

WHERE NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND



Liverpool City Region – A Place of Pioneers and Opportunity

Liverpool City Region (LCR) is strategically and centrally positioned on the UK's west coast. With a **£35bn economy** and a population of **1.6 million people**, it is a global gateway built on international trade and connectivity, driven by innovation.

LCR is brimming with economic opportunity, primed for investment, and made for living. Its continuous **culture of innovation** and **strong sense of community** sets LCR apart. Its success is driven by its greatest asset: **people**. Their warmth, character, entrepreneurial spirit and ideas mean everyone coming to the City Region, from visitors to investors, can experience and benefit from a unique sense of **pride, passion** and **belonging**.

The Economic Opportunities Framework sets out our strategic narrative to frame this: focusing on transformational strengths, capabilities, and opportunities. It demonstrates who we are and what we have to offer: a City Region with a targeted focus on unlocking its **global potential**.

A Place Where People and Businesses Choose To Be

To maximise its potential, **a place must first have the right mix of enabling conditions**. LCR has these in abundance and is continuously investing in its vibrancy, communities, connectivity, and talent.

Culture

A **'Global Cultural Capital'**, with the highest density of arts, entertainment, and recreation jobs outside of London.

Unique musical heritage with Liverpool's designation as a **UNESCO City of Music**.

57m visitors per year, ranking third in the UK for **international visitors** with world-renowned heritage buildings, museums, sport, and a thriving nightlife.

Importance as a destination is reflected in government designation as a **Local Visitor Economy Partnership** area, and as a host of major international events, such as Eurovision.

Culture in LCR creates new opportunities for people and places and is key to prosperity in the fullest sense, supporting **health, wellbeing** and **regeneration**.

Connectivity

A UK digital connectivity leader through **LCR Connect**, providing a 212km fibre backhaul network.

Accelerating the delivery of a fully integrated transport network through a **£500m investment** in Merseyrail, with **new trains** including battery technology, a **fleet of hydrogen buses** and planned **600km walking and cycling network**.

Together with **bus franchising and integrated ticketing**, LCR is delivering affordable connectivity to bring people and places closer to areas of economic opportunity.

Housing and Community

A **wide-ranging housing offer** incorporating contemporary urban living complemented by Georgian townhouses and traditional suburban neighbourhoods.

A **strong sense of community belonging** that adds to quality of life and vibrancy of place.

Sustained ambition to diversify the City Region's housing offer to ensure affordability, create and develop new markets, whilst improving quality of housing stock through retrofit programmes and urban regeneration.

Alongside this, LCR has a **highly distinctive city/countryside/coastal** lifestyle combination.

Talent and Opportunity

Priority of talent development, attraction, and retention, underpinned by developing **future-focused skills**.

A strong mix of further education colleges, community learning and independent training providers offers multiple **learning routes** to build confident, independent learners with transferable skills.

LCR is home to a **thriving student population** of 57,000, and is founded by university teaching excellence. A focus on embracing core economic opportunities will ensure more people stay in and support the City Region post-graduation and drive the **knowledge economy**.

Our enabling conditions support our key strengths to create an environment for increasing prosperity and productivity. LCR's **leading innovation capabilities** converge with key clusters, particularly within **Advanced Manufacturing, Health & Life Sciences, and Digital & Creative**.

Freeport and Investment Zone: Enabling Trade, High Value Investment and Growth

- **One of only three places in the UK** offering locational and tax advantages through both Freeport and Investment Zone which are key government backed growth initiatives.
- **One of only two Life Sciences Investment Zones in the country** – unlocking more than £800m investment, creating 8,000 jobs, and building on innovation excellence.
- **Freeport** enables **efficient global transit**, supporting advanced manufacturing and logistics – creating **14,000 jobs**.

One of the Most Advanced Place-Based Approaches to Innovation in the UK

- Driven by **long-standing collaborations** between universities, research organisations, industry and the public sector;
- World-leading and distinctive strengths in **Infection Prevention & Control, Materials Chemistry, and AI Solutions/Emerging Technologies**;
- **£1.9bn innovation project pipeline** – high impact, R&D focused, supporting real world solutions; £725m of live projects;
- Focal points of nationally significant science and innovation campuses at **Sci-Tech Daresbury** and **Knowledge Quarter Liverpool**;
- **Supporting businesses to innovate** through continued local investments into an environment that turns ideas into commercial propositions;
- Strengths combine to drive towards a **target of 5% equivalent GVA investment in R&D**.

Cluster Strengths Providing Local Solutions to Global Challenges

From Discovery to Production - The Place for Health & Life Sciences Innovation: from world-leading R&D assets/capability through to one of Europe's most important pharma clusters. Government confidence is demonstrated through the **Life Sciences Investment Zone** that will further scale up world-class capability, and designation as a **High Potential Opportunity (HPO) Programme for Vaccines**.

A Place for Makers and Innovators with Continent Spanning Connections (Advanced Manufacturing): 15% of the UK's car production is in LCR with automotive leading a generational EV transition. Together with **biomanufacturing and vaccine production capability, competitive edge in digital manufacturing**, long established strengths in **marine engineering**, and connecting businesses to **innovation excellence**, the opportunity is to position LCR at the forefront of UK manufacturing innovation.

Inspiring Technology and Creative Spirit (Digital and Creative): A hub for businesses looking to become part of a **dynamic ecosystem**, providing opportunities for convergence of **Creative Content** (film/TV/gaming/music) and **Applied Tech** that transcends sectors (including Health/Med Tech and Fintech). **Home to the Hartree National Centre for Digital Innovation**, it is underpinned by digital capabilities and high-performance computing positioning LCR at the forefront of technology-driven industrial solutions.

Strengths are bolstered by LCR's position as the Pre-eminent Western Global Gateway to the UK Economy: It is the **UK's third biggest port** and **main transatlantic gateway** handling 45% of all US trade, and supported by multi-gateway infrastructure assets that supports speed to market. Underpinned by a **buoyant and innovative maritime sector**, offering global connections and expertise.

Supported by one of the highest concentrations of **financial services** and **wealth management** companies outside of London, and a **vibrant social economy**, with the City Region having all the ingredients to become a **UK Social Investment Pathfinder**.

Innovation Board and private sector led **Business & Enterprise Board** and **Cluster Boards**, help inform and shape policy, partnerships, investment and delivery.

Convergence of our strengths to push the Net Zero boundaries: Driving global industrial decarbonisation and clean energy solutions with a distinctive portfolio of investable opportunities: **Glass Futures**, a world first international centre of excellence; plans to deploy **Green Hydrogen Hubs** across LCR; **HyNet North West**, the UK's leading industrial decarbonisation project; **Mersey Tidal** which can be the UK's de-facto tidal energy hub; and **building out one of Europe's largest clusters of offshore wind farms** in Liverpool Bay through tripling the volume of wind energy by 2032.

Realising our Economic Opportunities

Public, private, and academic partners across LCR are continuously investing into developing the conditions for wider economic growth and in mobilising resources to deliver and realise our core economic opportunities.

We are developing a fully integrated approach across:

Economy: fore-sighting supply chain opportunities, innovation cluster development and emerging business clusters, fostering an innovation culture across all of the business base, enhancing business networks, and understanding and acting on barriers to productivity.

People: access to opportunity as our overarching priority, alignment of skills provision with economic opportunity, supporting and encouraging businesses to upskill and reskill, a strategic approach to technical and future-focused skills, and improved access to careers information.

Place: focus on strategic transport corridors linking to economic clusters; investing in equal transport opportunities for all; further widening housing choice & quality; linking key economic opportunities to placemaking and regeneration; addressing market challenges for commercial premises development; digital connectivity being secure, high-speed, high-capacity, and low latency.

Through a sustained and highly targeted focus on both our identified economic opportunities and the enabling environment, and through working in partnership with Government and industry, we can support key targets and outcomes, such as:

- GVA growth from £35bn (2021) to £45bn in 2035 – a transformational growth scenario where LCR maximises the potential of its economic strengths and opportunities;
- Achieving Net Zero by 2040 or sooner;
- Securing investment of 5% equivalent of GVA spend on R&D;
- Increasing the level of exports to 35% of our GVA as set out in our Export Plan, and increasing the percentage of Foreign Direct Investment coming into the City Region;
- Increasing the proportion of knowledge intensive businesses from 22% towards the national level of 26%;
- Progress in closing productivity and business density gaps;
- Improved outcomes across the skills continuum and enhancing career progression routes;
- Increased health equity as a result of investments and developments across Health and Life Sciences that combine with public service innovation.

Integrated approaches to realising our economic opportunities will ultimately drive our underpinning principles to be fully:

- **Innovation-led:** building and sustaining comparative advantage and driving up productivity across the business base;
- **Inclusive:** expanding the number of residents in work across all communities, enabling progression routes, and making jobs more productive;
- **Connected:** with more people and places having access to opportunity through digital and transport connectivity;
- **Sustainable:** delivering economic development sustainably, focusing on low carbon economy opportunities, growing the circular economy and transformation of energy infrastructure.

