

Employment Land Accelerator Proposed Methodology

A 3-stage methodology is proposed.

Output 1: Site selection and intelligence gathering - The development of an Employment Accelerator Fund Sites Pipeline.

This includes the development of an Employment Accelerator Fund Sites Pipeline. We have developed the following criteria for identification of sites. This is based on the definition of strategic employment sites defined in the Leeds City Region Strategic Employment Evidence - Land and Property report (2021)¹ produced by Hatch and discussion with key stake holders

The proposed criteria for the long list are:

- **Strategic Sites:** Sites (of any size) that provide a strategic importance to a specific sector or would support specific sectoral growth or sites with strategic importance linked to the Local Authority evidence / targets.
- **Spatial Priority Areas:** Sites falling entirely or partly within a Spatial Priority Areas
- **Scale and size:** large sites over 15 Ha are generally regarded as strategic as they offer the scale needed to attract large scale inward investment
- **Location:** Sites located close to key transport infrastructure such as mass transit corridors, motorway junctions, major rail infrastructure, wharfs or airports can usually be considered to be strategic.

The initial pipeline will be based on land that is allocated for employment uses or brownfield employment land but will not be limited to this. We are keen to work with local authorities to identify where there may be opportunities for new employment sites that reflect emerging thinking on new local plan preparation and other opportunities that may be presented because of other infrastructure investment such as Mass Transit, for example.

As part of this initial intelligence gathering process, we will undertake a desk top review of sites, including planning history and planning policy review, previous known land uses, site constraints (i.e. flood zones, power cables, listed buildings etc), site access, ownership and known site delivery issues. This will be completed in consultation with LA Partners.

¹ [Regeneris Report \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.west-yorkshire.gov.uk/regeneris-report)

Output 2: Site prioritisation - The development and application of a prioritisation framework.

Once the pipeline sites are identified, a score card approach will be used to prioritise sites for use of revenue funding, this mirrors the tested approach used in the Housing Pipeline. This criteria-based approach will prioritise sites aligned to the Combined Authority priorities and local growth strategies.

Prioritisation factors in the pipeline include:

- **Job Growth Potential:** sites which can deliver employment growth in sustainable locations, supporting skills development and particularly in areas where there is a need for regeneration and higher levels of deprivation as identified through the Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- **Sectors:** sites can be prioritised where they have the potential to meet the needs of high growth or priority sectors², support the expansion of key clusters, building on the region's existing strengths, or have the ability to provide a range of flexible units, including growth space, within a high quality and well-planned environment.
- **Strategic Alignment:** strength of alignment to the Combined Authorities Strategic Economic Framework / West Yorkshire Investment Plan / Mayoral Priorities and to Local Plan Policy and Local Authority economic growth and regeneration strategies.
- **Delivery:** schemes that offer the greatest prospects of delivery or highest value outcomes within reasonable timescales.

Please note that we intend to refine the examples above. It is not our intention at this stage to rule out sites from the pipeline as we are keen to retain an element of flexibility to the prioritisation of sites to allow our approach to be agile and reactive. The above approach means that we will be able to prioritise different sites to respond to opportunities for funding as those opportunities come forward. For instance, if a new opportunity for capital funding comes forward focused on advanced manufacturing, we want to have sufficient flexibility to adapt the prioritisation of the pipeline to select those relevant sites.

Output 3 - Site acceleration activity

We intend to develop a programme of works to accelerate employment site delivery through site promotion and de-risking development locations. Activities would include, but not be limited to:

- securing feasibility studies and detailed site assessments,
- master planning,
- development and option appraisal and market analysis.

² Priority Sectors will be agreed in consultation with Local Authority Partners and based on Combined Authority and Local Authority Policy and Strategies.

Aligned to this, we would work with LA Partners to explore opportunities to attract investment through positive promotion and partnership working alongside the potential use of restrictive planning policy to target key sectors on some sites. As with the Housing Pipeline, there is potential to utilise revenue funding to support LA Partners with addressing resource gaps if this is appropriate and to test the deliverability of projects across the employment pipeline, to a point where projects are ready to enter investment/capital programmes.

These activities will support follow on commercial investment by developers (with the opportunity to claw back revenue funding) and / or allow the CA the agility required to successfully bid for and deliver schemes aligned to national funding streams as they come online (e.g Investment Zones).