

# The West of East Devon: Redefining how we work and live well





# Redefining how we work and live well

A Clean Growth Vision for the  
West of East Devon

Imagine a place that exemplifies carbon leadership – zero carbon by design, working symbiotically with the resources nature provides. Imagine a place where housing is Low-Carbon and high quality. Imagine a place that enhances and works with its natural environment, creating hectares of new country parks, while renewing and recovering biodiversity. Imagine a place that embraces the future of work, that attracts world-class innovators, grows green skills and supports the development of world-class solutions. Imagine a place where you can enjoy everything nature has to offer – coast, country, thrill-seeking or quiet reflection.

Now, imagine being able to call a place like this home.

# Our Clean Growth Vision

Transitioning our economy to one underpinned by clean growth is one of the greatest industrial opportunities of our time. Our vision is for the West of East Devon to play a leading role in this transition, not just within the South West, but also exploiting local invention and knowledge nationally and internationally to increase our influence and impact.

Our vision for the West of East Devon is to be to be a carbon leader - for new development to be zero carbon and for the region to take proactive steps to address emissions from legacy sectors. Our vision is to provide leadership and new business opportunities in “hard to decarbonise” sectors where innovation is vital and where we have world-leading strengths – sustainable aviation, decarbonisation of transport, greener buildings, smart grids and environmental risk and finance. Our vision is to radically reduce carbon while growing our economy and, through world-leading skills delivery, providing opportunities for all to ensure that growth is inclusive. Our vision is to deliver a place that enhances and works with its natural environment, and provides an exceptional quality of life for all its residents.

The West of East Devon is uniquely placed to lead. Bringing together unique knowledge assets, world-leading environmental expertise, an airport committed to sustainable aviation, opportunities for retrofit and sustainable development, and industry-leading technology pilots, our area offers a rare combination of assets and innovative spirit that make it ideal as a demonstrator for whole-system change.

This document sets out our vision, opportunities and actions to put clean growth at the very heart of our economy. Our vision is set out in five key themes:

Redefining how we work and live well	Our vision to deliver a world-class lifestyle offer and seize the opportunities emerging from the future of work.
Energy from Nature	Our vision to be leaders in clean energy infrastructure, utilising our natural resources to be net exporters of energy.
Invest & Learn	Our vision for a thriving innovation ecosystem, world-leading skills offer and active learning through demonstrators.
Inclusive Growth	Our ambition to create a platform for new opportunity open to all, while ensuring the benefits of growth are felt widely.
Zero-Carbon Place-Making	Our vision for homes and places to be net zero and to enhance connections between people and nature.

# Background

## The West of East Devon

The West of East Devon, shown in Figure 1, is an area of development set within close proximity to the Clyst Valley Regional Park and bounded by a series of Green Wedges. The new settlement of Cranbrook is the largest town in the West and plays a core role in the growth plans for the area. There are plans for Cranbrook to expand up to 8,000 homes by 2031 at which point it is expected to be the second largest town in East Devon. Cranbrook is also planned to include over 12,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment land and other services alongside new housing.

## The East Devon Economy

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, economic growth in East Devon was similar to that of the wider South West. Productivity in East Devon is higher than other local districts such as Mid Devon and West Devon. However, productivity lags that of the South West (Figure 2) and is significantly below that of England as a whole.

Key sectors within the area include air transport, wholesale trade and warehousing and support services for transport. 90% of air transport employment was provided by Flybe which went into administration in 2020. While Flybe's business and assets were bought in April 2021, the long-term impacts are still uncertain. Fortunately the area has seen growth in the logistics sector, driven by the investment by large international corporations (Lidl, Amazon, DPD). East Devon will need to support the local workforce in building the skills of the future for green growth and a stronger economy.

Long-term job growth is focused around knowledge-based assets and increased innovation. For example, Exeter Science Park provides a core site for knowledge-intensive, R&D-focused businesses. This, and adjacent sites, are seen as a key driver for R&D investment within Devon (Figure 3) to increase wider productivity, employment and prosperity.

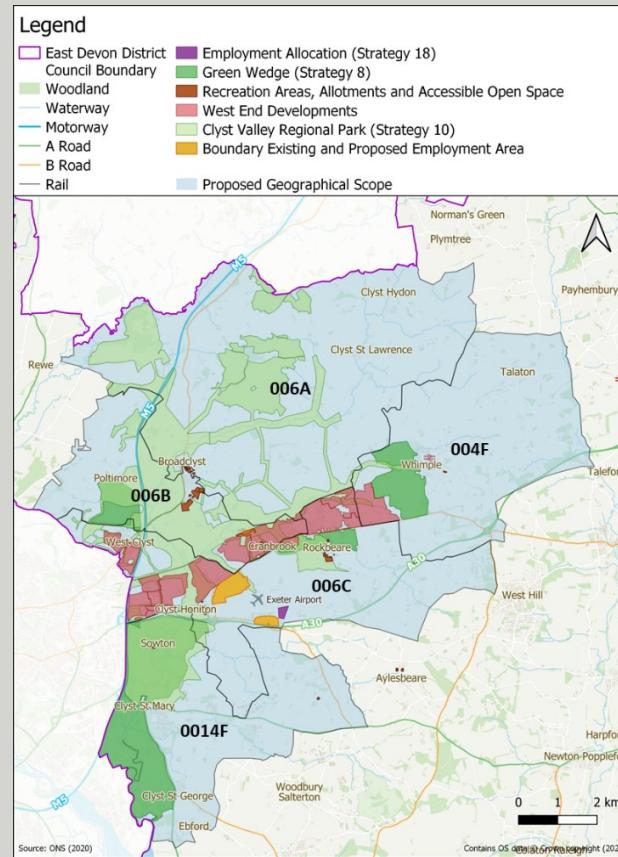


Figure 1: The West of East Devon Study Area



Figure 2: GVA per Job in East Devon compared to Exeter, the South West and England

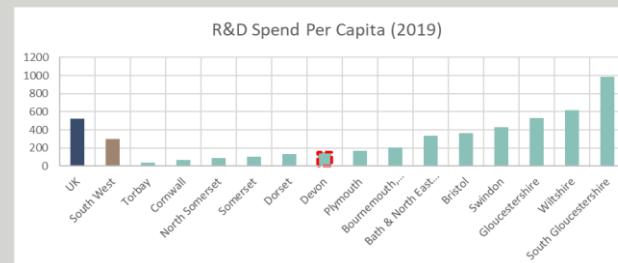


Figure 3: R&D Spend Per Capita in Devon compared to the South West and UK

# Building on Our Key Strengths

## Unique Assets in Close Proximity

The West of East Devon is a place of exceptional assets - a special combination of natural capital, skilled innovators, ambitious local partnerships, energy resources, and ample space for Low-Carbon business growth. The West of East Devon is a natural "gateway" linking Exeter and East Devon to the world through national and international connectivity. Already an established focal point for growth, the West of East Devon is home to a growing number of high-performing, knowledge-intensive businesses, employment sites and new housing.

### Unique Synergy

The area's uniqueness stems from having collaborative assets and capabilities within close proximity including natural resources, expertise in clean technology and opportune test sites.

### High-growth sub-region

The area including Exeter and the West of East Devon is one of the fastest growing sub-regions in the country. This strong spatial connection presents significant opportunity.

### Skills Provision

The University of Exeter, Exeter College and a range of other skills providers have a strong track-record of delivering integrated skills pathways and developing programmes to support industry need.

### Natural Assets

The Clyst Valley Regional Park, wider landscape and green work space support an exceptional quality-of-life offer, with renewable resources providing significant decarbonisation opportunities.

### Human Capital

Considerable expertise exists within the region including within anchor institutions such as the University and Met Office, highly-innovative businesses and local demonstrators and developments.

### Strong Partnerships

Regional partners have a strong legacy of collaboration, appetite for innovation and track-record for delivery. This forward-looking spirit is exemplified by early leadership in heat networks.



# A Compelling Offer

## The Investment Opportunity

The West of East Devon is a catalyst for growth. The local area is one of the fastest-growing sub-regions in the UK already providing significant new housing and sustainable employment. Further investment in the West will act as a catalyst, driving the creation of new industries, skills development and economic benefits across the wider South West,.

## Economic Opportunity

The West of East Devon will provide highly-productive employment and innovations that will drive productivity across the wider region. Increased productivity within East Devon alone represents a £537 million opportunity through increased GVA. Access to a highly-skilled workforce in East Devon, Exeter and across Devon will support sustainable growth.

## Clean Investment

Transitioning the economy to net zero presents a significant investment opportunity. In buildings alone, this includes £394 million in the domestic sector and £140 million in the non-domestic sector. Our success will catalyse this investment, creating 7,000 new local jobs.

## Increased R&D

Our vision is for the West of East Devon to stimulate significant new research and development. By bringing together industry, academic expertise, investment, and demonstrators within our 'Living Lab', the West of East Devon will accelerate collaboration and new discoveries that deliver benefit locally and nationally and support business growth.



## Our Innovation Ambition

Our region is home to world-class innovators undertaking ambitious trials to unlock new clean technologies. Our ambition is to take a proactive approach, working with innovators to support and develop a pipeline of innovation projects and demonstrators across clean technology. This 'Live Lab' approach will ensure we broaden our portfolio of innovation projects even further. These innovations will be essential to enabling the decarbonisation of aviation, buildings, freight and wider transport within our own region, but will also provide critical insights and solutions that can be exploited across the UK and internationally. We will create clear links between innovation and scale-up to ensure we translate learnings from pilots into economic and decarbonisation benefits.

# An Unrivalled Clean Growth Opportunity

## Key Sectoral Specialisms to Catalyse Change

The West of East Devon is uniquely positioned to act as an integration point and real-world demonstrator for zero carbon technologies. With local capabilities across 9 out of 10 technologies identified through the government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, the West of East Devon presents a compelling opportunity to demonstrate how whole system transformation can be delivered.

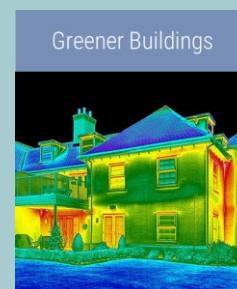
Our ambition is to strengthen our growing portfolio of pilots and demonstrators across all Clean technologies. We have identified four key areas for proactive investment that will unlock the greatest economic benefits for our region and the UK – Jet Zero, Green Finance, Greener Buildings and Smart Grids.



Jet Zero

### Jet Zero

- Future-proofing a £12bn sector for the UK Economy.
- Potential to contribute to 5,200 UK jobs



Greener Buildings

### Greener Buildings

- Significant skills and systems opportunity.
- Potential to contribute to 50,000 new UK jobs by 2030
- £11bn opportunity



## Case Study: 2Zero

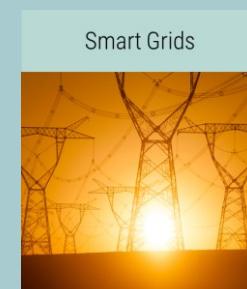
The West of East Devon is already home to industry-leading trials in clean aviation. Bringing together a global consortium of innovators, the 2Zero project has demonstrated hybrid-electric aircraft on regional commercial routes between Exeter and Newquay Airports providing pathways to zero emission for regional aircraft operations. The consortium includes California-based Ampaire, Rolls Royce, Loganair and Exeter and Devon Airports.



Green Finance & Innovation

### Green Finance

- Exceptional local expertise in climate risk forecasting
- World-leading business school and sustainable MBA



Smart Grids

### Smart Grids

- £67bn global market opportunity
- Exceptional research specialisms
- Leading assets and international projects

# Energy from Nature

## Infrastructure of the Energy Revolution

Our vision is to be leaders in clean energy infrastructure. As a region blessed with natural resources, we have an opportunity to be net exporters of energy, whilst spearheading the clean energy revolution and enhancing our natural environment. This will require wholesale change - trialling and adopting new technologies across our entire economy.

We will become leaders in clean energy infrastructure by:

- Developing and supporting a diverse portfolio of energy innovation projects
- Supporting the development of SMART and renewable energy assets through the planning system
- Identifying opportunities to support accelerated investment into renewable energy
- Supporting research, trials, commercialisation and skills development across energy efficiency and generation technologies including Hydrogen
- Catalyse new collaborations between stakeholders, researchers and industry to unlock critical constraints.



# Driving the Future

## Testing and Scaling Solutions

The West of East Devon is a natural hub of innovation in clean mobility. Combining world-class research groups alongside a growing logistics sector, and airport committed to sustainable aviation, the area has a strong opportunity to pioneer approaches to decarbonisation of fleet, flight and specialist vehicles. Many local businesses are already showing leadership in the decarbonisation of their fleets. Our ambition is to build on this strong progress, supporting shared learnings and innovation projects to unlock opportunity.

We will strengthen our capabilities and visibility in this areas by:

- Proactively working with local operators to understand their decarbonisation needs
- Bringing together industry and academic to tackle complex decarbonisation challenges
- Develop innovation and demonstrator opportunities that work with our natural assets
- Actively promoting our successes on a national and international stage.



## The Centre for Future Clean Mobility

The Centre of Future Clean Mobility on Exeter Science Park, stands at the forefront of the road to zero carbon transport. A research facility established by the Engineering Department of the University of Exeter, the Centre for Future Clean Mobility specialises in developing new hybrid and electric powertrain technologies for cleaner mobility. Working with industry partners across maritime, aviation, freight, personal and autonomous vehicles, the Centre Future Clean Mobility has an extensive and growing portfolio of research projects.

## Case Study: Electric Road Systems

The decarbonisation of long-haul road freight presents numerous technical, regulatory and design challenges. The Centre for Future Clean Mobility is working with leading industry partners including Wood Plc and Furrer & Frey to explore the feasibility of Electric Road Systems as a potential decarbonisation technology for freight and logistics as part of a high-profile, DfT-funded project.



# A Thriving Innovation Eco-system

Securing our future through invention today

The West of East Devon presents an enormous opportunity for innovation. Already the site of world-class innovation assets, exceptional digital and transport connectivity, ample space to grow and the benefits afforded by Enterprise Zone status, the West is an emerging powerhouse within the South West economy.

**Our Vision is to foster an entrepreneurial community, focused on solving society's biggest challenges through the application and demonstration of world-class knowledge. We will do this by...**

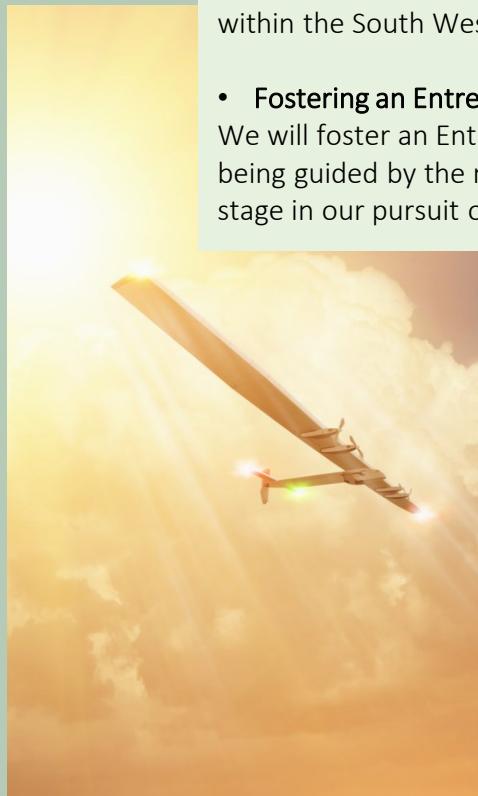
- **Delivering a World-Class Infrastructure Offer**  
Building on the exceptional assets and opportunities of the West, including the benefits afforded by Enterprise Zone status, we will deliver a world-class infrastructure offer that is attractive to businesses and employees alike, with the context of visionary decarbonisation targets.

- **Actively Pursuing Innovation**  
We will actively pursue innovation and demonstration opportunities through a catalytic model to stimulate public, private, and research partnerships to unlock clean growth.

- **Connecting Research & Industry**  
We will create the forum for collaboration within and around our core innovation themes, stimulating interest from global partners and growing our share of Foreign Direct Investment.

- **Supporting Businesses at Every Stage**  
We will develop a proactive and entrepreneurial business support and funding network covering ideation, investment, go-to-market, growth and scale-up to make the West of East Devon the best place to start a business within the South West.

- **Fostering an Entrepreneurial Community**  
We will foster an Entrepreneurial Community, being guided by the needs of business at every stage in our pursuit of clean growth.



# Delivering Inclusive Growth

A Place for People to Flourish

## Building Futures

Our vision is build a future where everyone has a chance to flourish:

- Creating great places where people can thrive
- Creating new opportunities within our region
- Building future opportunities for all our residents
- Improving productivity and average wages
- And securing a zero carbon future for our planet.



## Stimulating Passion

Our vision creates the platform for new opportunity. We will create the conditions for success by developing and delivering tailored skills pathways. Our vision, combined with world-leading skills provision, will inspire and excite a new generation of innovators to create their own opportunities within clean growth.

## Inclusive Opportunity

It is essential to our vision that the benefits of clean growth are spread widely amongst all our communities. Our vision for clean growth aims to open up opportunities to all, while delivering a wide range of co-benefits including improved community cohesion, improved environment, Net-Zero homes, and reduced energy and travel costs.



## An Entrepreneurial Spirit

This vision sets out a bold ambition for our region reflecting the dynamic, entrepreneurial spirit of our communities. This vision is grounded in our shared passion for the natural environment. By demonstrating how we can enhance our environment whilst supporting innovation we will create solutions that can be replicated globally.

# Invest and Learn

Building on our unique skills offer

It is essential that the UK workforce has the correct skills for net zero to take advantage of the jobs being created. Our vision puts skills development at the heart of our response of the transition to a zero carbon economy.

**Clean Growth Industrial Need**

Our ambition is to create a vertically-integrated skills pathway that responds to the needs of the transition to Net Zero. Our skills approach will be built on strong collaborations with industry and serve the needs of the whole UK.

**Learning from Real-World Demonstration**

**Vertically Integrated Skills Pathways**

**World-Class Research and Innovation**

Our ambition is that through skills development, the opportunities of Clean Growth are available to all. To support skills we will strengthen connections between learners and industry, providing real-world exposure to clean technology.

**Industry-Leading Skills Provision**

Our vision for skills provision is to create new symbiotic links between industry leaders in clean technology, skills providers, world-class research and demonstrators across our region, promoting learning opportunities locally.

# Embracing the Future of Work

## Hybrid Spaces and Places fit for Modern Industry

**The world of work is changing.** While the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating in many ways for many people, it has also accelerated significant changes in the way we work. Greater flexibility, increasingly distributed teams and a proliferation of digital technologies are all key trends that are here to stay. Collectively, these trends can support both improvements in productivity and quality of life as part of a well-designed work offer.

**Our opportunity.** The West of East Devon has a significant opportunity and aspiration to take a leading role in redefining workspaces for a modern, knowledge-based economy, supporting clean growth of new local start-ups and relocating businesses.

**Our Vision is to create places that accommodate the modern needs and aspirations of employees and businesses.** Businesses locating in the West of East Devon will be able to provide an unrivalled employment offer. Agile, vibrant work hubs will be designed and located to maximise employee autonomy, while connecting teams through a sense of community and entrepreneurial spirit. Linked together by a network of tree-lined cycleways, these dynamic, digitally-connected hubs will have easy access to homes, nature, services, leisure and knowledge centres. Collectively providing a “campus feel” the series of sites will maximise opportunities for collaboration, innovation and flexible growth.

## Transforming Skills for the Clean Growth Opportunity at the Future Skills Centre

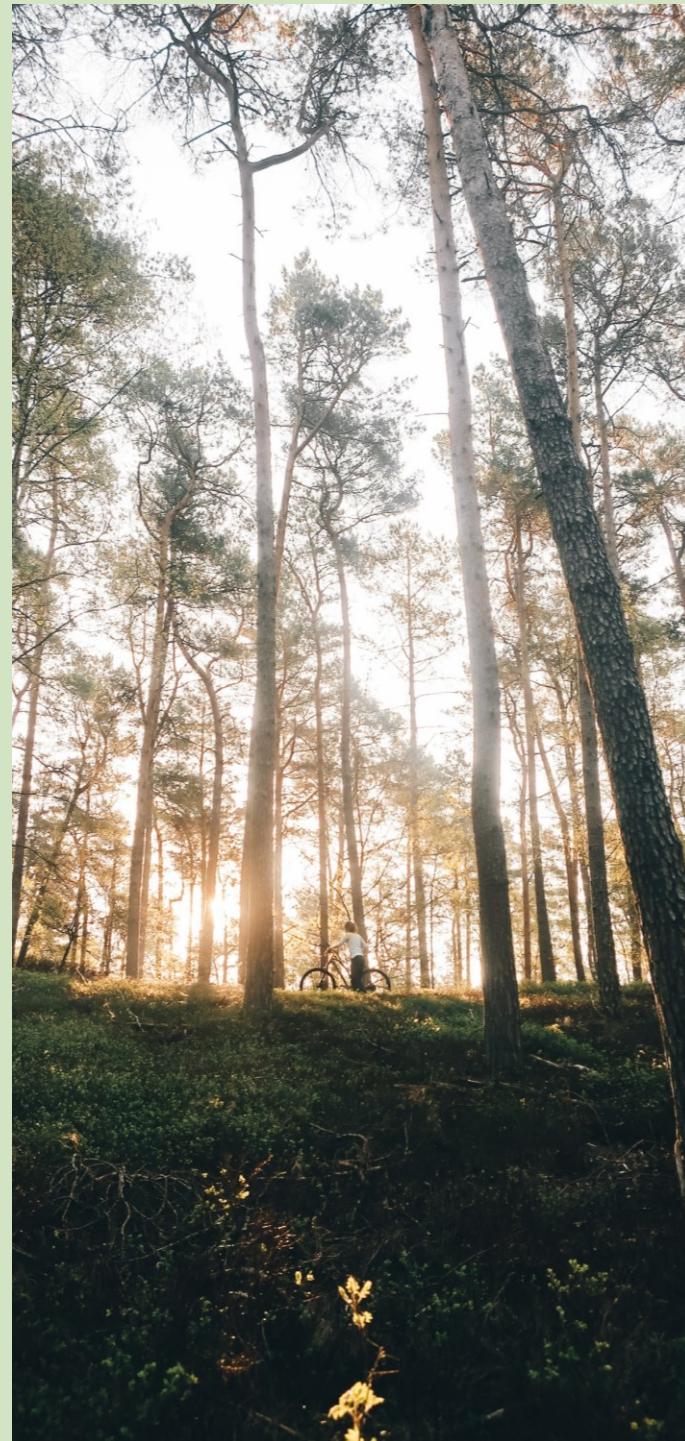
Our transformative clean growth sectors are supported by ambitious and industry-leading skills provision. Our regional partners have an exceptional track-record of pioneering skills development at all levels. These partners work in collaboration with industry to create transformative skills pathways to deliver against business and technical need.

Our skills offer for the Clean Growth opportunity will build on exceptional assets and training facilities such as the Future Skills Centre, maximising the potential for local learners to interact with industry and kick-start their career in Clean Technologies.



# A Place to be Proud of

Leadership in Zero Carbon Place-Making



## Zero Carbon Place-Making

Homes and places in the West of East Devon will be delivered in partnership with nature, embracing ambitious zero carbon place-making objectives.

Community facilities will be within walking and cycling distances, while fast and reliable public transport will be prioritised over the private car.

## Zero Carbon Homes

Our region has already pioneered approaches to district heating and zero carbon standards of design.

Our vision for the West will ensure that every home is designed to be zero carbon. We will continue to pioneer new techniques and modern methods of construction to deliver high-quality homes, that are zero emissions over their lifetimes.

## Infrastructure-led Development

Our vision is to create a sustainable, net zero carbon community, that gives residents and businesses a genuine alternative to the private car. We understand the need to deliver key infrastructure and services at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure that new residents have what they need on their doorstep.

We will design communities around the concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods accessible by safe and attractive cycling routes and zero carbon public transport. We will ensure the energy infrastructure to deliver net zero is secured up-front. And we will ensure world-class digital connectivity to link local communities to global opportunities.



## Restoring Nature

Our vision for the West blurs the boundary between the built environment and natural landscape, enhancing the connections between people and nature. Integrated networks of nature recovery sites, habitats and wildlife corridors will weave through the West, supporting biodiversity net gain and rewilding and bringing nature to residents doorsteps.

## Connected Communities

Our vision is to create diverse, mixed communities of homes, that serve the needs of first-time buyers, key workers, families, and downsizers.

Our spatial vision will create accessible spaces for communities to gather including around communal public spaces, leisure facilities, parks, and community-owned assets.



# A Chance to Redefine

Opportunities to Create With Us

## The West of East Devon

The West of East Devon offers a number of valuable commercial, connectivity and green infrastructure assets. Some of these assets are well established (such as Exeter Airport), whilst others provide new opportunities for high-quality development and economic growth. This page sets out a selection of the core assets and opportunities for collaboration and investment.

## Clyst Valley Regional Park

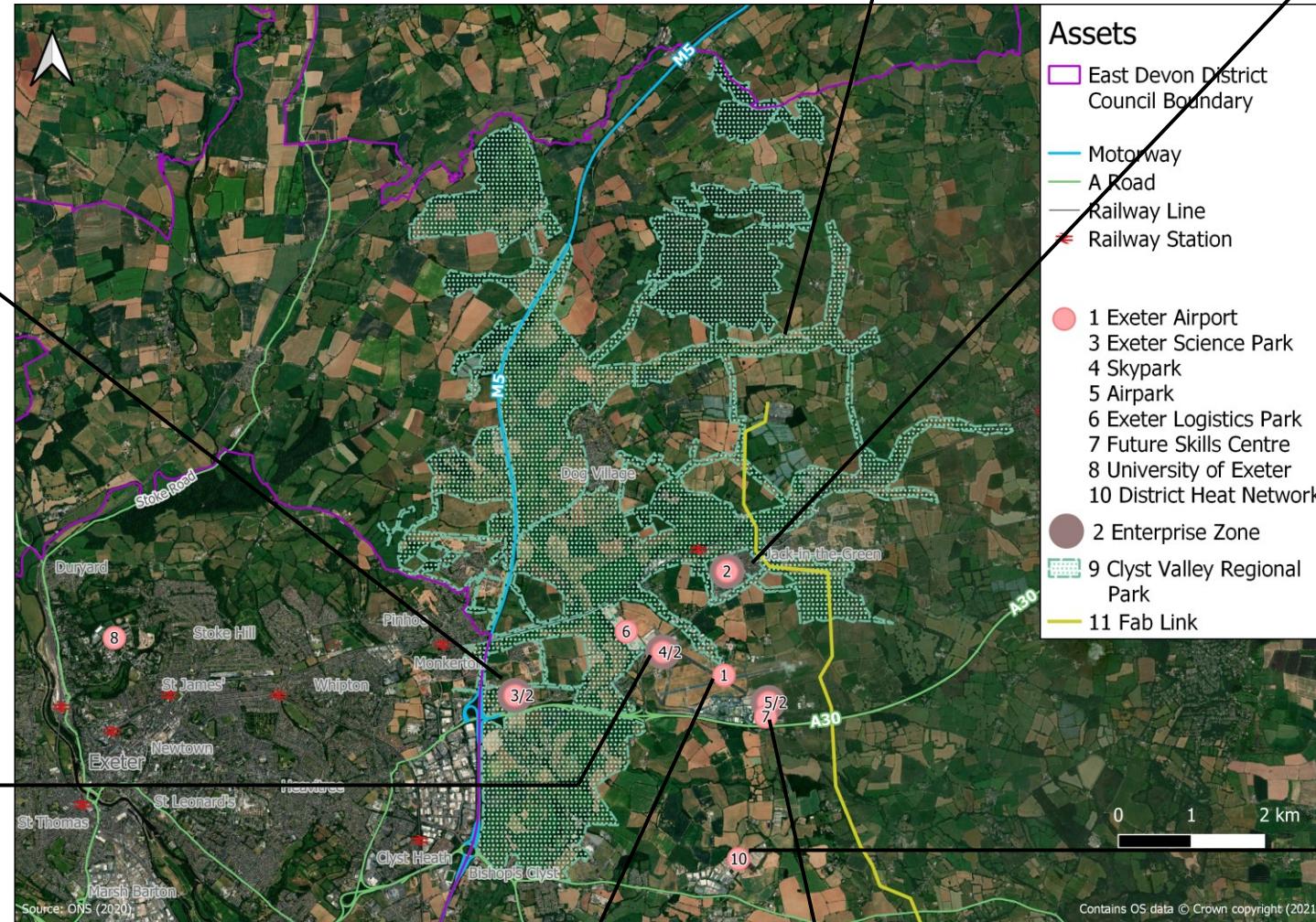
The Clyst Valley Regional Park provides 2,338 hectares of green space and habitats with a footprint that is roughly half the size of Exeter. The aspiration is that, over time, 1,500 hectares will be fully accessible by the public, to complement developments within the West End and providing opportunities for leisure, active travel corridors and nature recovery.

## Cranbrook New Town

Cranbrook is a new town in the West of East Devon. With around 3,000 properties having already been delivered, Cranbrook is expected to eventually grow to 8,000 Net Zero Ready homes providing an opportunity to accelerate sustainable construction skills in East Devon. Cranbrook has a train station providing connectivity to Exeter and London.

## The Clean Growth Gateway

The Clean Growth Gateway includes a number of cornerstone assets and businesses at the Western tip of the West of East Devon including the Met Office a cluster of clean technology businesses. Key assets include Exeter Science Park – a site for innovative businesses, with Enterprise Zone status, in addition to existing space, Exeter Science Park has outline planning permission for 822,000 sq ft of development.



## Jet Zero and The Sustainable Aviation Cluster

The Sustainable Aviation Cluster comprises a series of assets proximate to Exeter Airport, supported by the Net Zero Sustainable Aviation Board. These include:

- **Skypark:** With over 100 acres of space, Skypark aims to be the South West's most significant Business Park development combining office, industrial and distribution space with a range of local facilities.
- **Power Park:** Is one of four sites that make up the Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone and consists of land to the east of Exeter Airport designated for future development.

## Exeter Airport

Exeter Airport sits at the heart of the Sustainable Aviation Cluster and aims to be a leader in clean aviation. The airport provides connectivity to a range of domestic and international destinations. Managed by RCA group who recognise that the decarbonisation of the aviation sector is critical to future success.

## Future Skills Centre

The Future Skills Centre is located on the site of the former Flybe Training Academy. It was purchased by Devon County Council in 2020 to provide training and education opportunities to learners of all ages. Run by Exeter College, the centre provides specialist facilities for the delivery of training for future-facing high-tech jobs.

## Energy Network Innovation

- **Heat Networks:** The region is a leader in the development of District Heat Networks. District Heat Networks present the opportunity to provide cost effective, low carbon heat to both residential and commercial properties. The Skypark Energy Centre provides hot water and heating to housing in Cranbrook and commercial buildings at Skypark as well as a private wire to the Lidl distribution centre, while the Monkerton Energy Centre provides hot water and heating to housing around Monkerton, Tithebarn and West Clyst, as well as commercial buildings at the Science Park.
- **FAB Link:** The FAB (France – Alderney – Britain) project plans to construct an electrical interconnector underwater and underground between France and Great Britain via the island of Alderney. The link, which allows a maximum transmission of 1.4GW, will help to meet the need for increasing the capacity of energy trading between the UK and France and provide a route to market for marine renewable energy as well as a potential opportunity to generate Green Hydrogen.



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