

Economic Growth Strategy

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Executive Summary

South Lakeland aspires to be the very best place to work and to do business. It is an ambition that focuses on the need to create the right opportunities for economic growth, recognising that further investment will be needed to enable the district to fulfil its economic potential. That ambition is reflected in the recent adoption of a new local plan and the council's commitment to delivering 1,000 jobs and 1,000 new homes.

South Lakeland is one of a very few local authorities in the North West with an adopted Local Plan including both a Core Strategy and Land Allocations. This document sets out a strategic framework for economic growth and development in South Lakeland. It updates and develops the Economic Development Strategy 2004 and Eden and South Lakeland Delivery Plan 2010.

The council is committed to working with employers, partners and investors to deliver development, economic growth, local employment and to promote training opportunities. In particular the council will continue to;

- Promote South Lakeland as a world class destination for business
- Work with the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to create the conditions for business growth
- Work with developers on regeneration projects and identify land available for business use
- Improve skills and support growth in the private sector
- Encourage investment in South Lakeland

South Lakeland is a place where we build on our traditional strengths, and where we want to pioneer new industries that make the most of our special environment. We want to promote new ways of working so that businesses can compete and reach their potential whilst enjoying everything that is special about living in South Lakeland.

Introduction

South Lakeland is a special and unique place, different from anywhere else in the UK. The natural environment is outstanding and the number and extent of national designations are testament to its very special status.

Wherever you look there is evidence of the contribution that people have made. South Lakeland combines a rich industrial and agricultural heritage, vibrant working market towns, industrial entrepreneurship contrast vividly with the district's strong tradition of hill farming. What the old and the new have in common are communities whose spirit of innovation and inventiveness, often borne out of self-reliance, has thrived here for centuries. These have become characteristics of South Lakeland and we intend to build on that proud heritage to make sure that our traditional industries, such as food, farming and tourism, remain as relevant and a competitive in the 21st century as the new knowledge-based and hi-tech businesses that South Lakeland will increasingly attract.

South Lakeland is one of a very few local authorities in the North West with an adopted Local Plan including both a Core Strategy and Land Allocations. The Core Strategy sets out a vision for the area in 15 years' time;

“South Lakeland consists of inclusive, sustainable communities. The district has a more balanced population, with an increase in the proportion of children and young people, and people of all ages playing a full role in community life. New development has taken place in a manner that mitigates against and adapts to the cause and impacts of climate change.”

“A vibrant and thriving tourist sector continues to be an important part of the local economy...but there has been a set change in the district's economy, with a growing entrepreneurial culture, higher levels of business creation and the establishment of new knowledge-based industries.”

The Land Allocations plan identifies allocates 60 hectares of land for new business including prestige strategic employment sites, business park sites and sites to meet local needs. There are sites all over South Lakeland waiting to be developed for new employment.

The plan also proposes the delivery of around 5,400 new houses between now and 2025. This will create much needed affordable and market housing to meet housing needs generated by local economic growth. The residential component will also bring significant economic benefits in terms of stimulating activity in the construction sector and elsewhere in the local economy.

The next phase of the Local Plan is the preparation of development briefs including a master plan for the strategic employment site at Scrogg's Wood, Kendal and the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy which will help to fund the infrastructure costs associated with opening up employment sites.

South Lakeland is a place where we build on our traditional strengths, and where we want to pioneer new industries that make the most of our special environment. We want to promote new ways of working so that businesses can compete and reach their potential whilst enjoying everything that is special about living in South Lakeland.

Within all that we do, we will continue to be guided by the principle that South Lakeland must retain and build on our special and unique assets. We can rise to the challenge of creating the opportunities for economic growth, and in so doing find more sustainable ways to achieve our economic goal. There are good reasons to be optimistic, with developments in technology and global trends working together to make our natural assets a source of real competitive advantage.

Economic conditions

At any given point in time, the economic conditions of the UK, and beyond, provide the context for the economic performance of South Lakeland. There is no immunity from the significant challenges facing the national economy, and therefore any measures to address economic growth in South Lakeland must be considered within these difficult circumstances.

In the period from 2008 the UK economy has been challenged by some of the most difficult economic conditions it has faced for several decades. Using Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a measure of all the economic activity in the UK, the economy has been through a period of recession in 2008/9 followed in recent years by what the Office for National Statistics (ONS) refer to as a ‘bumpy plateau’. Although the path of the economy does appear to be on an upward trend it remains well below historic growth rates.

The response from government is to support Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to help to determine local economic priorities and to lead economic growth and job creation within local areas. South Lakeland is part of the Cumbria LEP and they are increasingly being used by central government as the means to channel public resources into measures to promote economic growth and investment¹.

Government has encouraged LEPs to draw up plans for local growth as the means to secure public funding through the Local Growth Fund. This is a competitive bidding process and the bid from Cumbria LEP set out in the Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2024 (SEP), sets out the current priorities for promoting growth and investment within the Cumbria economy.

The vision in the SEP is for “Cumbria to have one of the fastest growing economies in the UK, in an energised and healthy environment. Our economy is complex and diverse, encompassing world-class engineering, manufacturing and energy companies, alongside

¹ No Stone Unturned, report to government. M.Heseltine, October 2012

high-quality food and drink companies and a unique and unparalleled visitor offer.” The four strategic investment priorities are:

1. Advanced manufacturing growth
2. Nuclear and energy excellence
3. Vibrant rural and visitor economy
4. Strategic connectivity of the M6 corridor

Economic geography

Economic activity is, however, not constrained by the boundaries of public administration and the policies of economic development and growth now focus much more on functional economic areas within which there are economic similarities in terms of business sectors, travel to work patterns and labour markets.

South Lakeland’s economy is actually made up of several economies, each influenced by the existing hubs or service centres and their connectivity to other towns, cities and regions. Indeed there is a complex web of economic interactions which reach well beyond the shores of the UK.

The economic geography of South Lakeland is nonetheless characterised by the location of its towns, the transport infrastructure, the presence of specialist industries and its outstanding coasts and countryside. Figure 1 highlights the geography and the strategic fit to emerging economic priorities for the county.

Figure 1: Economic geography of South Lakeland



1. M6 Growth Corridor

Competitive advantage through transport infrastructure, specifically M6 and West Coast Mainline railway. (Priority 1 Cumbria Economic Ambition)².

Asset = Communications Infrastructure.

2. Rural and Visitor Economy

Competitive advantage through nationally and internationally recognised landscapes and brands, specifically Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks and Arnside and Silverdale AONB. (Priority 4 Cumbria Economic Ambition)².

Asset = Environment.

² Cumbria's Economic Ambition, Cumbria County Council, September 2012
A National Cradle for Advanced Manufacturing- Economic Vision for Furness, July 2012

3. Advanced Manufacturing

Competitive advantage through cluster of specialist and expanding manufacturing companies, specifically including BAE and GSK. (Priority 3 Cumbria Economic Ambition)².

Assets = Existing Pool of Knowledge/Expertise.

In the east of the district the M6 and West Coast Mainline (WCML) provide vital transport arteries connecting to the UK's major centres of population. These connections open up access to regional, national and international markets. Indeed, within the context of Cumbria, South Lakeland clearly benefits from greater proximity to these existing markets and, most significantly, there is proximity to the region's international ports to provide valuable gateways to international markets, both for the export of manufactured goods, and for international visitors to the Lake District.

South Lakeland has a fabulous environmental resource. Significant parts of the district have national landscape and wildlife designations, including parts of two National Parks and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Few districts in the UK could boast such status. These environmental assets provide something you cannot build or buy.

They must be protected, and through their conservation the district can benefit economically, not only in supporting the significant visitor economy in South Lakeland, but in creating new opportunities for economic growth. We should not underestimate the attractiveness to a new generation of 'footloose' digital and creative enterprises, as well as a variety of knowledgebased businesses. With the development of much improved communications infrastructure, these businesses can exist perfectly well alongside the more traditional land-based businesses that contribute so much to the district's distinctive landscape heritage.

In the west of South Lakeland's district are some of the most inventive and creative manufacturing businesses in the UK. The economic relationship between South Lakeland and Barrow and the Furness peninsula is vital to the economic prosperity of our sub-region, creating opportunities for economic growth in an area that is rapidly becoming a "national cradle" for advanced manufacturing. South Lakeland can create the opportunities for economic growth, working with partners on the Furness peninsula to assist in developing and improving the skills that are needed by those successful businesses with ambitions to expand and grow.

Economic assessment

Our understanding of the local economic conditions and economic geography of South Lakeland is informed by economic data and analyses, including the findings of a Local Economic Assessment³. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to economic development and growth in South Lakeland (Figure 2) are informed by the local economic assessment and the analysis used to inform the preparation of the Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2024.⁴

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Strong GVA⁵ growth rate
- Diverse, resilient economy
- Employment strong in distribution, hotels and restaurants, retail, banking and finance
- Several internationally significant employers
- World class skills in specialist manufacturing
- Qualification profile largely mirrors UK
- Internationally recognised “Lakeland” brand
- Significant environmental assets: 2 National Parks, and an AONB
- Business survival rates high
- Transport Connectivity within the North West

Weaknesses:

- GVA per job still low despite strong GVA growth, the gap with national GVA still exists
- Pockets of high youth unemployment
- Business ‘deaths’ exceed ‘births’
- Transport, planning, skills and access to finance perceived as barriers
- Limited and patchy high speed broadband coverage
- Affordability of housing across the district
- Relatively low working population due to demographic profile

³ Cumbria Local Economic Assessment: key findings for Eden and South Lakeland, University of Cumbria (CRED) and Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, November 2010

⁴ The Four Pronged Attack, Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2024, Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership.

⁵ GVA or Gross Value Added is commonly used as a measure of the goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy

Opportunities:

- Economic conditions improve – household spending rises/ recovery of Eurozone demand
- Potential to protect and build on high value manufacturing
- Environment sector – low carbon, renewables, higher value agri-products
- Potential to build on existing finance, IT and business sectors
- Develop high value tourism offer
- Build further on our niche and artisan food and drink sector
- Exploit M6/WCML communications
- ‘Connecting Cumbria’ higher speed broadband roll out

Threats:

- Economic conditions worsen – further squeeze on household spending/struggling exports with weak Eurozone demand
- Projected decline in working age population constrain workforce growth
- Decline in public sector as consequence of austerity measures
- Manufacturing employment moving overseas
- Retail restructuring increases volume of vacant premises in town centres
- Missing opportunities presented by potential in our key sectors

(Source: Cumbria Local Economic Assessment: Findings for Eden & South Lakeland, University of Cumbria and Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, November 2010)

The SWOT analysis draws out a set of ten of the most significant economic challenges facing South Lakeland. Using logic chains it is possible to derive a set of strategic outcomes from these challenges.

This helps to ensure that the economic strategy remains focused on the delivery of economic measures responsive to the specific issues facing South Lakeland.

Framework of Challenges, Objectives and Strategic Outcomes

Challenges	Current Status	Objectives	Smart Outcomes
GVA Productivity Gap relative to UK	GVA growth closing gap to UK	Improve GVA per head	A more productive economy
Low earnings and skills shortages	Below average earnings and shortage of specific skills	Improve average earnings and skills	A higher wage economy and broader skills base
Housing affordability	Very high affordability ratios	Increase affordable housing stock	A more affordable place to live
Conditions for business growth	Business deaths > births	Business births > deaths	A diverse and growing business base
Rural location distant from markets	Access to M6, WCML, superfast broadband	Improve access to customer markets	A better connected district
Barriers to business growth and expansion	Difficulty accessing skills, sites and finance	Improve access to supply of labour, land and finance	A better place for businesses to grow and expand
Ageing population	Smallest % working population in Cumbria	Attract working age people	A more economically active population
Protecting the natural asset	Businesses not all taking action to be sustainable	Increase no. of green accredited business	A more environmentally sustainable economy
Tourism spend not reaching potential	Overseas and staying visitors small % total	Increase no. and % overseas visitors	An international tourist destination
Threat to future of town centres	Decline in number of businesses	Decrease no and % vacant premises	More vibrant town centres with improved business viability

Vision, aims and objectives

Activities to deliver these strategic outcomes are grouped into strategic priorities for action. For example:

- Supporting business and enterprise (GVA, business growth and employment sites)
- Enabling a skilled and flexible workforce (skills development and training)
- Securing the infrastructure needed for growth (transport, communications and housing)
- Promoting a low carbon, sustainable economy (environmental quality and sustainability)
- Raising profile of South Lakeland as best place to live, work and explore (branding and marketing)

Framework of Strategic Aims and Objectives

Economic purpose

To make South Lakeland the best place to live, work and explore.

Strategic Aims	Objectives
1. To secure improvements in productivity and employment through support for business growth and new enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate expansion of higher value businesses in terms of output and employment • Facilitate growth of business base with support for startups and self-employment • Promote business growth and new enterprise in town centres
2. To achieve a more flexible and highly skilled workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure vocational training and qualifications are relevant to the needs of local business • Promote take up of Apprenticeships with key employers
3. To ensure that investment in infrastructure stimulates growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure suitable employment sites in strategic locations • Identify and secure investment in road improvement schemes • Ensure the highest broadband speeds are available to all growing businesses • Ensure supply of labour is not unnecessarily constrained by lack of affordable housing • Maximise opportunities for business development and growth in town centres
4. To promote a low carbon, sustainable economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and encourage businesses to take up investigate and invest in greener technologies • Promote and encourage reduce, re-use and recycle • Promote and encourage more energy efficient businesses and the use of renewable energy
5. To attract and promote business investment in South Lakeland	Raise the profile of South Lakeland as “best place to do business.”

These priorities for action fit with those identified in South Lakeland District Council Plan 2014 which states the economic ambition to “achieve inward investment to at least three major employment sites creating 1,000 new jobs in South Lakeland.” In particular;

- A place where businesses grow and create jobs

- A high wage economy
- A skilled workforce with education and apprenticeships available

The council is committed to working with employers, partners and investors to deliver development, economic growth, local employment and to promote training opportunities. In particular the council will continue to:

- Promote South Lakeland as a world class destination for business
- Work with the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to create the conditions for business growth
- Work with developers on regeneration projects and identify land available for business use
- Improve skills and support growth in the private sector
- Encourage investment in South Lakeland

The Cumbria LEP provides the strategic lead in relation to countywide economic growth. In its Strategic Economic Plan it has identified four priorities: advance manufacturing, nuclear and energy excellence, vibrant and rural visitor economy and the strategic connectivity of the M6 corridor. In addition to these it has identified key underpinning sectors of construction, digital media and creative, logistics and transport, business services, low carbon and renewable energy, agriculture including land and sea based.

The LEP has also prioritised the need to:

- Inspire and support businesses to reach potential – locally, nationally and internationally
- Ensure motivated and skilled people, both employees and entrepreneurs
- Ensure the right infrastructure to support business competitiveness and growth
- Use Cumbria's environment as a key economic asset

Priority actions for South Lakeland

The following priorities for action in South Lakeland reflect these countywide priorities as a shared ambition to drive investment and growth, but naturally they are refined and tailored to take advantage of the particular opportunities to create economic growth in our distinctive part of the county.

The five priorities for action reflect the four identified by Cumbria LEP and, in addition, South Lakeland will prioritise the need to market and promote the district to raise its profile regionally and nationally as a place which aspires to be the very best place to work and do business. Our five priorities are described below:

1) Business

Creating the right conditions for, and focusing interventions on, those businesses with greatest potential for growth. The right conditions include access to sites, finance and knowledge; all which will create confidence to invest. The aspirations for South Lakeland are:

- Businesses connecting and trading in the rest of the UK and internationally, leading to increased profitability, greater resilience, more and better paid jobs
- Businesses connecting with each other, achieving economies of scale and punching above their weight
- Businesses making use of new high speed broadband including flexible working from home and remotely
- Emergence of a fresh perception of South Lakeland as one of the best connected places and part of the global mainstream

Actions or measures focus on:

- Facilitating growth of existing successful businesses whilst attracting businesses from elsewhere to locate all or part of their business in South Lakeland
- Raising awareness of how other South Lakeland businesses have grown nationally and internationally by shining the spotlight on success stories, using this to promote a positive image of South Lakeland as “the best place for business”
- Removing obstacles that can stop businesses growing or exporting such as creating planning strategies for business and facilitating growth that helps to protect and enhance our very special environment
- Making it easier for our small and medium sized enterprises to find the right kind of business support including specific advice with challenging issues such as accessing finance and finding suitable sites or premises
- Championing the “once in a generation” opportunities presented by the latest developments in high speed communications technology
- Role of council procurement in supporting businesses

South Lakeland already has a number of great businesses but there are many others who have yet to realise their full potential. Creating opportunities for economic growth can be aided by increasing aspirations, and then helping those aspirations to be achieved.

People's perceptions of South Lakeland are also important and we should ensure that these are well-informed and add 'best place to work and do business' to the nation's positive image of South Lakeland as one of their favourite places to live and to visit. This activity is essential to attracting inward investment and therefore critical to the achievement of our growth ambitions.

Superfast broadband and the internet are changing the way we all live and work. It is increasingly possible to trade internationally from a base in South Lakeland, talking to customers and colleagues around the globe using the latest technology. Indeed technology now enables us to live where we want to live and trade where we want to trade. It is becoming much easier for our small businesses and self-employed to work in partnership with other businesses so they can compete for larger contracts in collaboration. Much more of this can happen by facilitating improvements in networks and by tailoring business support to fit individual business needs.

2) Skills

Creating the right conditions for growth means ensuring that businesses with ambitions for growth and investment in South Lakeland can meet more of their needs for skilled labour, drawing candidates from the local labour market wherever possible. The aspirations within South Lakeland are:

- Matching the demand for skills with the supply of skills
- More skilled work, with higher salaries, delivering improved productivity
- Maximising the potential of local talent and retaining their skills in South Lakeland
- A culture of learning new skills, then updating and improving them to meet emerging opportunities
- Those acquiring new skills recognise South Lakeland as the "best place to live and to work"

Actions or measures focus on:

- Developing the skills of all workers to match local job opportunities
- Identifying future market opportunities and skills needs, helping employers and employees to scan the horizon and plan ahead
- Brokering a stronger dialogue between South Lakeland's businesses and training providers to ensure that businesses get the training they want and need
- Advocating the benefits of training to employers and working with them and training providers to make South Lakeland a better place for an individual to pursue a career

There is a strong relationship between the performance of an economy and the quality of the workforce. In South Lakeland this appears to be somewhat contradictory. For example, evidence from examination results demonstrates how well young people are performing in

our local schools, and yet businesses report that they cannot find the skills they need locally. Many individuals hold the opinion that there are not enough jobs in South Lakeland of the type to attract and retain well qualified people. Out migration of young people is part of the explanation but not the whole explanation. Skills levels are high in South Lakeland despite the loss of young people but not necessarily in the desired skills areas. Businesses consistently report their struggle to attract the best possible talent and yet South Lakeland includes some of the highest skills levels in the country. It might be the case that those with the highest skills are currently under-employed, perhaps semi-retired in some cases, but there is a mis-match that merits further explanation. Solutions, where needed, should be pursued as a matter of priority.

It is vital that South Lakeland businesses are staffed by talented and ambitious people, with the skills that are needed to anticipate and exploit new market opportunities. This helps businesses to grow and achieve their full potential. Enabling existing workers to re-skill is a fundamental means of supporting the growing and emerging sectors such as pharmaceuticals, LEDs and renewables. There is little doubt that more of those well-qualified graduates from South Lakeland may seek to return if they can see the development of greater career choice.

3) Infrastructure

Creating the right conditions for growth means ensuring that businesses with ambitions for growth and investment in South Lakeland can find suitable sites and premises, transport their goods without unnecessary impediment, and communicate with businesses anywhere in the world by a variety of means, quickly and effectively. The aspirations within South Lakeland are:

- Businesses accessing quality work space, equipped with fast and reliable communications technology at every stage in their growth and development
- Businesses taking full advantage of leading edge fibre communications technology and turning it to commercial advantage
- Opportunities in growing global markets such as LEDs, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, digital and creative industries being seized and fully exploited

Actions or measures focus on:

- Facilitating roll out of high speed communications technology across South Lakeland and prioritising locations with greatest economic potential
- Facilitating the provision of quality work space that is available and fully geared to the needs of knowledge based businesses at every stage
- Make it easier for businesses to transport goods through road and rail improvements, by influencing decisions and enabling improvements that unblock pinch-points on the road and rail systems both within and beyond the district
- Improvement in rail services to facilitate easy access for business

Infrastructure means more than IT or technology. There is a role of leisure facilities, schools, mixed housing, shopping and entertainment for example. Businesses supported by the best available infrastructure are more likely to be competitive globally.

4) Environment

Creating opportunities for economic growth means leaving no stone unturned. For many businesses in South Lakeland the environment can provide considerable economic benefits. Aspirations within South Lakeland are:

- A growing reputation nationally and worldwide as a 'green' region which delivers resource-efficient, low carbon solutions
- All businesses reducing their impact on the environment, lowering energy costs and carbon emissions where possible, to the point where we have a reputation as a resource-efficient, low carbon business community and all new building demonstrates best practice in sustainable construction
- More business activity in renewable energy production
- Recognition of the environment, culture and communities as important economic assets in food, farming and tourism industries to create growth where feasible and sustainable
- All new builds, including housing and other major developments to be leading edge environmentally

Actions or measures focus on:

- Working to attract investment to grow emerging sectors
- Supporting businesses that also contribute towards protecting our environmental assets, for example sustainable construction and the built environment, use of brown-field sites, transport and waste management
- Supporting the development of high value markets for sustainable local food, farm and eco-tourism products and services
- Ensuring all businesses can easily find advice and any incentive support to reduce their impact on the environment
- Promoting South Lakeland as a 'green exemplar' developing a concept of 'environmental growth', using economic prosperity to enhance the environment

The growing emphasis on renewable energy and on healthy natural lifestyles that respect the natural environment are national and international trends which are creating opportunities for economic growth through rapidly growing markets and business opportunities.

As the relationship between the environment and business continues to grow closer our unique and very special environment can be used, in a responsible way, as a business asset. It is what makes South Lakeland attractive as a place to live, work, visit and in the light of current global trends it is now opening new and exciting business opportunities.

5) Marketing and promotion

Creating the opportunities for economic growth in South Lakeland means raising the profile of the district as a place for doing business. There is a need to highlight the economic strengths of South Lakeland, to communicate these clearly and precisely. The aspiration for South Lakeland is:

- A growing reputation as a premier location for business, with a specific focus on the knowledge-based, digital and creative, and advanced manufacturing sectors

Actions or measures will focus on:

- Developing the 'Invest in South Lakeland' and 'Explore South Lakeland' activities to establish an effective brand and to fine tune the targeting of marketing and promotions
- Increasing, improving and growing links with UK Trade and Industry and the Government department Business, Innovation and Skills to ensure South Lakeland's profile is raised nationally and internationally
- The Invest in South Lakeland programme will continue to provide information and support to businesses of all sizes, covering all industry sectors, whether already located in the district or looking to locate operations here

How we will deliver

There is a real opportunity to create 1,000 new jobs through the Invest programme and the success of the Local Plan over the next five years. The Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan also supports this vision of creating new jobs, bringing new business, expanding our markets, supporting industry and increasing the district's competitive edge. The council will deliver these aims through the Economic Growth Strategy by:

1. Implementing the Council Plan which sets the priorities with delivery through the service plans
2. Having a role in being entrepreneurial and facilitating support for businesses either taking a lead, being a partner or being a helpful observer
3. Taking a role of facilitating social business ventures. This provides the community with more opportunities to deliver economic benefit
4. Delivering the aims of the council's Economic Growth Strategy which will drive the work we do rather than being led by adhoc funding opportunities
5. Working with partners to deliver their strategic plans where synergy is evident. For example Destination Management Plan with Cumbria Tourism and the Lake District National Park Authority's Partnership Plan

Sources of Evidence for SWOT Analysis

Issues of challenges	Evidence	Sources
Productivity in South Lakeland low relative to UK	Despite strong growth in recent years, GVA per head of population and per filled job remains below the national average in East Cumbria (South Lakeland, Eden and Carlisle). At this level, GVA per head of population is lower than the UK figure despite high economic activity levels and high job density (85.6% and 0.86) relative to the UK (77.3% and 0.78)	Office for National Statistics (ONS) Gross Value Added (GVA) measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector. ONS Job density. Density figures represent ratio of total jobs to population aged 16 to 64
High youth unemployment in “pockets”	Unemployment is low in South Lakeland relative to UK but youth unemployment (2.4%) is high relative to other age groups (0.9%) and there are local areas within the district where this is higher, specifically in Ulverston where ward statistics demonstrate “pockets” of much higher youth unemployment	ONS claimant count – age duration with proportions for age group 18 to 24
Business deaths exceeding business births	Between 2009 and 2013 the numbers of business closures continued to greater than the number of businesses setting up with the overall business base shrinking in size between 2011 and 2013	ONS Business Counts and Business Demography Survey
Decline in working age population	Working age population in South Lakeland in decline (-2.8%) but growth in most of England and Wales (+7%)	ONS Population % change in working age population
Transport, planning, skills and access to finance	South Lakeland Survey confirms many businesses identify real and perceived barriers to their business growth	South Lakeland Employment Land and Premises Survey 2013
Limited and patchy high speed broadband	Exchanges enabled for high speed broadband	Connecting Cumbria postcode map of enabled exchanges
Affordability of housing across the district	Stock of affordable and social housing	Housing Market Assessment

Strengths or advantages	Evidence	Sources
Well connected	Proximity to larger centres of population and markets including supplies of skilled labour apparent through labour flows in and out of the district. Particularly strong connectivity with Lancashire and North West region through M6/West Coast mainline corridor	ONS Commuting patterns from Annual Population Survey
Diverse, resilient economy	Despite importance of visitor economy, no single industry or sector is dominant and broad base of business types High levels of self-employment/sole-trader businesses (21.3%) relative to UK (9.5%) Employment levels affected during economic “shock” quickly recover to pre-shock levels	ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis ONS annual population survey % economically active aged 16 to 64 NOMIS numbers in employment by year
Employment strong in distribution, hotels and restaurants, retail, banking and finance.	Employment by industries demonstrates importance of transport, distribution and accommodation for employment in South Lakeland	ONS employment by industries
Specialist manufacturers	Announcements by the major specialist manufacturers in South Lakeland indicate modest growth and expansion	SLDC Invest in South Lakeland 2013
Qualification profile better than UK	Qualifications and skills levels in South Lakeland are well above national, regional and county averages	ONS NOMIS Annual Survey
Business survival rates	Business demography survey reveals how the numbers of businesses created in south Lakeland dipped before recovering between 2009 and 2012	ONS Business demography dataset