Suffolk Cluster Development Plan

November 2025

SUFFOLK ECONOMY

plexal

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Contents

Executive Summary

The Suffolk Cluster Development Plan sets out a framework to deliver mission-led growth, positioning Suffolk as a national leader in powering, feeding and connecting the UK. Developed by Plexal and Tech East on behalf of Suffolk Economy, and building on the Suffolk Economic Strategy, it defines how Suffolk can attract new investment, accelerate innovation and deliver measurable benefits for local communities and the wider national economy.

Suffolk's strengths in clean energy, agri-food and drink, ports and logistics and advanced connectivity technology form an interconnected ecosystem that can transform how the UK produces, moves and powers its economy. The convergence of these sectors represents Suffolk's competitive advantage. Digital technologies can make agriculture smarter and logistics more efficient. Clean energy produced along the coast can decarbonise ports and industry. Food and drink producers can lead on low-carbon, technology-enabled supply chains. Together, these synergies create a distinctive growth model that combines economic resilience with environmental responsibility.

At the heart of this plan are **three strategic missions** that unite investment, innovation and skills around shared national priorities:

1. **Power Clean Growth** – Driving the UK's green transition, leveraging Suffolk's existing strengths in nuclear, offshore wind, alongside growing potential in hydrogen, bioenergy and solar.

2. **Sustain the Nation** – Leading a smart countryside revolution by applying clean and digital technologies to agri-food systems, enhancing food security, productivity and water resilience.

3. **Deliver Smart Logistics** – Making Suffolk the hub of sustainable trade through decarbonised freight corridors, digital logistics and stronger local value capture.

These missions are not abstract ambitions. They are the framework through which Suffolk can transform its economy, its role in the nation, and its attractiveness to investors. They align directly with national priorities around net zero, food resilience, trade competitiveness and innovation-led growth, while also offering a clear commercial story to business and industry. Each mission represents a market opportunity to generate growth, scale technologies and attract investment into the UK's most dynamic future sectors.

Delivering these missions will allow Suffolk to capture a greater share of high-value growth, build a skilled and inclusive workforce and anchor national supply chains locally. This is how the county moves from being a place where trade and energy flow through to a place where value is created, retained and reinvested.

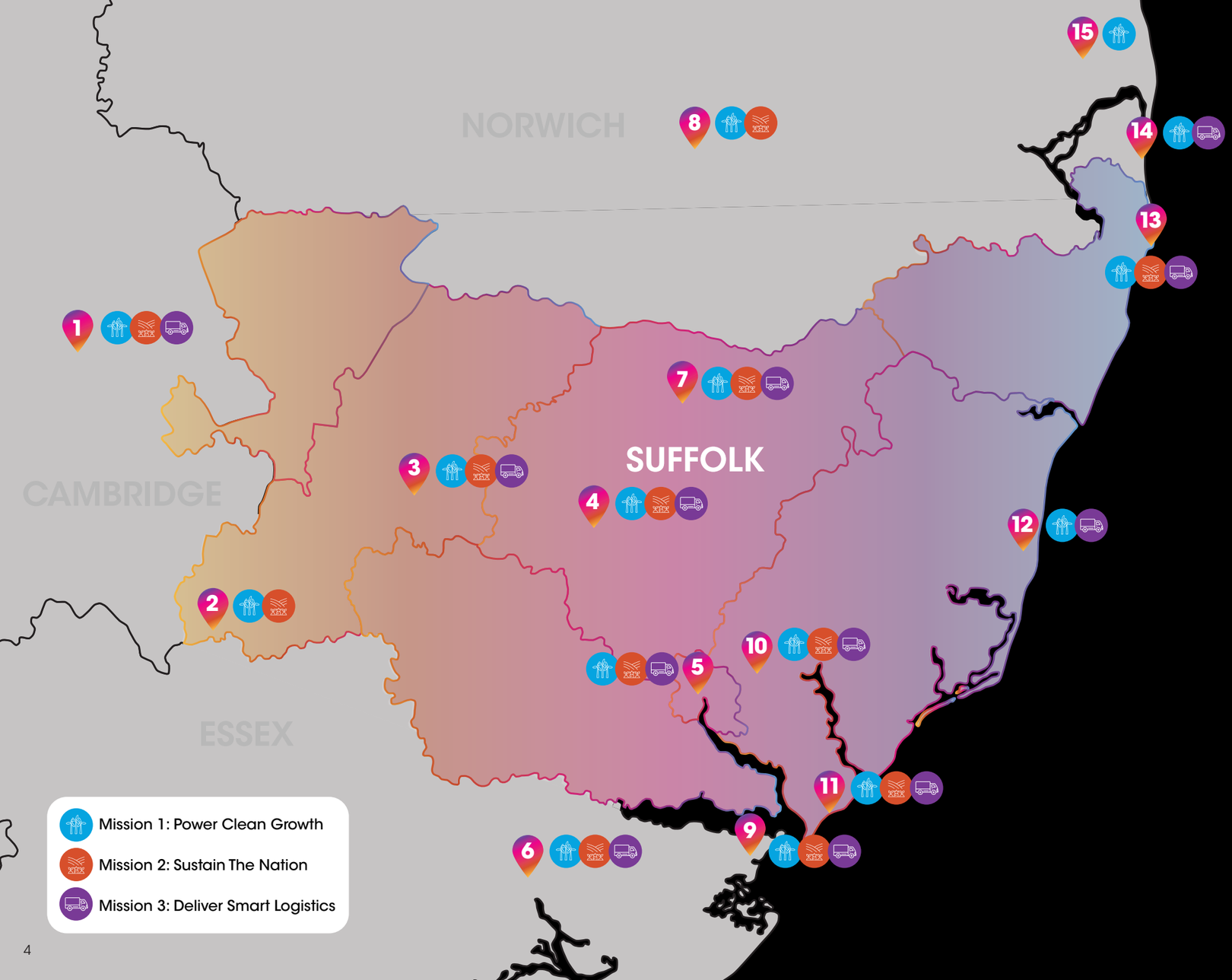
Cluster development will be the engine that enables Suffolk to turn its strategic position into a genuine competitive advantage. More than just concentrations of firms, clusters convene the right mix of stakeholders, assets and expertise to unlock innovation, tackle critical challenges and harness opportunities that benefits sectors, local communities and the nation. Therefore, accompanying this document is the Suffolk Cluster Intervention Cards, which presents a suite of targeted activities designed to support the development of Suffolk's four core clusters: advanced connectivity technology, agri-food and drink, clean energy and ports and logistics.

Complementing these are cross-cluster interventions, aimed at driving technology convergence and collaboration across clusters, enabling Suffolk to maximise its potential to deliver on its three missions. Leading this effort is the Mission Catalyst: a coordinator that connects Suffolk's industry stakeholders, academic partners, investors and entrepreneurs around clusters, and with missions ensuring alignment and impact to strengthen Suffolk's visibility at the national scale.

Suffolk's economic influence already extends well beyond its borders. Its ports handle nearly half of the UK's containerised trade. Its energy power millions of homes. Its agricultural systems support national food security. Together, these assets place Suffolk at the heart of the East of England innovation region, where complementary strengths across Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire are creating the scale needed to attract new investment and recognition. Through the emerging Mayoral Combined County Authority, Suffolk and its neighbours can align strategy, share resources and amplify their collective voice across national decision making.

This is not a document written for government alone. The Suffolk Cluster Development Plan and the Intervention Cards serve as a roadmap for business, investors and institutions who want to shape Suffolk's next phase of growth:

- For entrepreneurs and businesses, big and small, it identifies where the commercial opportunities lie; from digital energy systems to sustainable food production.
- For investors, it offers a coherent growth story backed by strong infrastructure, leadership and a ready workforce.
- For academia and research, it provides a clear framework for collaboration aligned with national priorities and real market demand.
- For sector groups convening stakeholders, it provides a shared framework to coordinate action, unlock opportunities for cross-sector collaboration and mobilise collective efforts to address critical challenges to growth and innovation.
- For residents and community groups, it highlights how Suffolk's growth ambitions translate into tangible benefits; from jobs creation and skills pathways to innovative solutions that improve everyday life.



1 Cambridge
- University of Cambridge
- Cambridge Nuclear Energy Centre
- National Institute of Agricultural Botany
- St Johns Innovation Centre

2 Haverhill
- EpiCentre

3 Bury St Edmunds
- West Suffolk College XR Lab
- Suffolk Business Park
- AME Centre (planning permission)

4 Stowmarket
- Gateway 14
- Skills and Innovation Hub

5 Ipswich
- Port of Ipswich
- University of Suffolk
- UoS Business Solutions Centre
- Suffolk Sustainability Institute
- Net Zero Skills Centre

6 Colchester
- University of Essex
- Essex Plant Innovation Centre

7 Eye
- Eye Airfield Industrial Park
- Eye Power Station

8 Norwich
- University of East Anglia
- Hethel Engineering Centre
- Norwich Digital Hub
- Norwich Innovation Lab
- Broadland Food Innovation Centre

9 Harwich
- Harwich International Port
- Green Energy Hub
- Harwich Innovation Hub

10 Martlesham Heath
- Adastral Park
- Space Enterprise Labs
- Quantum Optics Discovery Lab
- DigiTech Centre
- Innovation Martlesham

11 Felixstowe
- Port of Felixstowe
- Green Hydrogen Hub
- Green Freight Corridor

12 Leiston
- Sizewell B and C
- Hydrogen Demonstrator

13 Lowestoft
- PowerPark
- OrbisEnergy
- ORE Catapult
- Port of Lowestoft
- Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility
- CEFAS
- East Coast Energy Training Academy

14 Great Yarmouth
- O&M Campus
- Great Yarmouth Energy Park
- Beacon Park

15 Bacton
- Bacton Energy Hub

Why Suffolk, Why Now?

National and regional priorities are converging around clean energy, food resilience, and sustainable trade. Suffolk's unique mix of nationally significant assets makes it ideally placed to deliver against these priorities.

With a diverse industrial base, a strategic coastal location and major infrastructure investments already underway, Suffolk is primed to lead the UK in tackling urgent challenges. From food security and clean energy to smart logistics and digital infrastructure, Suffolk's strengths align directly with national ambitions for net zero, economic resilience, and innovation.

This is a pivotal moment:

- Devolution and the Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) unlock new funding streams and deeper collaboration with Norfolk.
- Industrial strategy priorities and a strong pipeline of projects are already attracting investment and creating jobs aligned to Suffolk's strengths. This includes nationally significant investments, such as Sizewell C.

To seize these opportunities, Suffolk must act now, breaking away from siloed approaches and moving towards coordinated governance, a unified voice and a mission-led strategy rooted in Suffolk's expertise.

To harness this potential, Suffolk is adopting a mission-led cluster development model. Through deep engagement with local and regional stakeholders, three bold and unifying missions have emerged. These are not just themes—they are the foundation for a targeted programme of economic transformation, cross-sector innovation and place-based growth. The three missions are: Power Clean Growth, Sustain the Nation and Deliver Smart Logistics.

Each mission is anchored in Suffolk's competitive advantages and supported by a growing pipeline of investable projects and delivery partners. Together, they provide a clear framework to galvanise the Suffolk ecosystem, direct future investment and strengthen the case for policy and funding support from central government.

Suffolk's Economic Engine

Agri-innovation

Research-led food systems and a growing water management expertise

Digital excellence

Pioneering tech convergence, with Adastral Park as a national technology hub

Trade gateway

Home to the busiest containerised port linking UK exports to global markets

Energy Powerhouse

A diversified energy generation portfolio powering over 6 million homes

Working Beyond Borders: Driving Regional And National Impact

Whilst this work focuses on Suffolk, it also recognises the strategic importance of collaborating beyond borders to maximise impacts. Suffolk's economic identity is firmly rooted in the East of England. Historically linked with Norfolk through the New Anglia LEP, it continues to collaborate regionally via initiatives like the Norfolk and Suffolk Unlimited and GENERATE. Sector groups such as AgriTech-E, The East of England Energy Group (EEEGR) and SpaceEast also reflect this East of England footprint. Collaborating across the wider region opens access to a constellation of facilities and networks that amplify Suffolk's cluster ambition. Equally, Suffolk brings its distinctive strengths that add value to the region.

Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire are building a coordinated innovation geography, defined by shared infrastructure, interconnected sectors and national missions. National initiatives like Freeport East, which spans across Suffolk and Essex, and the Innovate UK New Anglia Action Plan reinforce this regional coherence. For Whitehall, the "East" could be the scale that matters.

By acting as a single innovation geography, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Camebridgeshire are presented with both opportunity and responsibility. Coordinated messaging and delivery with neighbouring counties amplifies influence, positioning the region as a model for clean energy, food resilience and supply-chain security. When government seeks integrated demonstrators, combining logistics, clean power, agri-tech and digital systems, the East can credibly deliver.

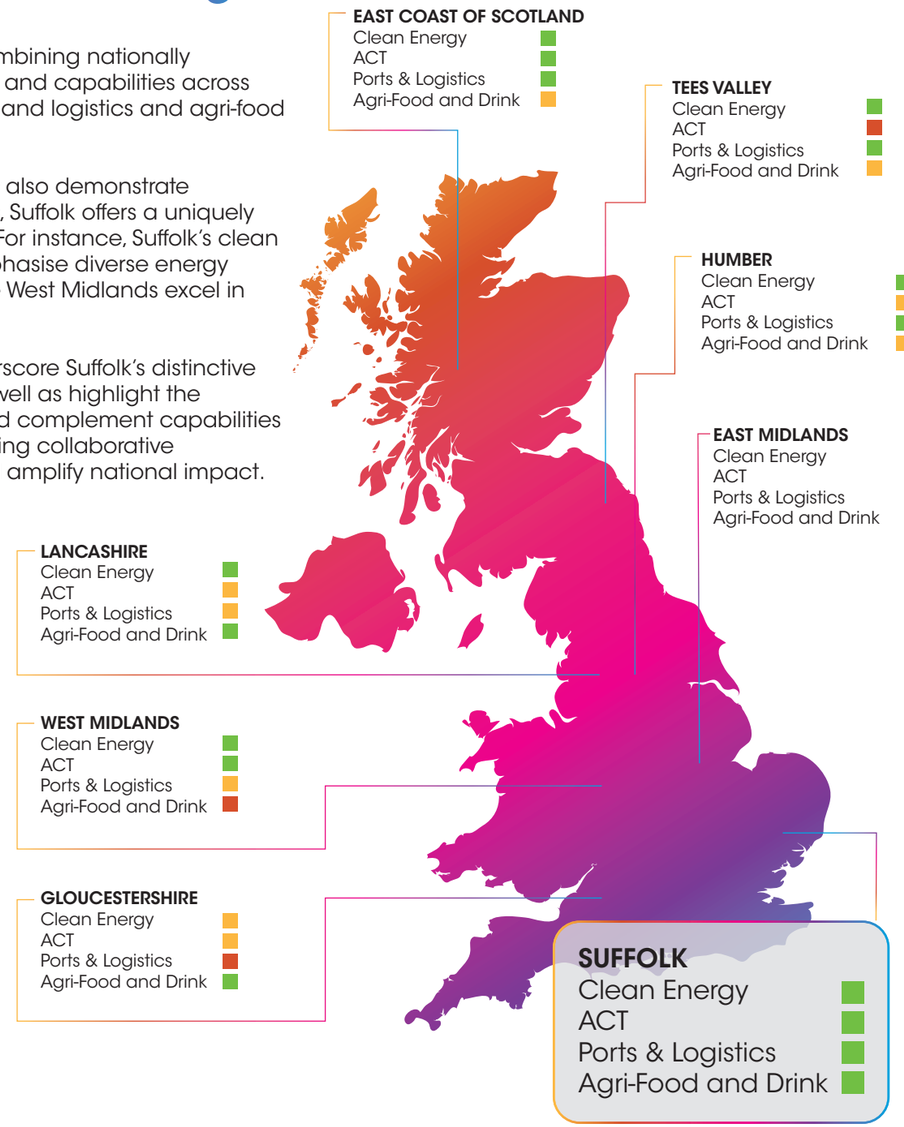
Whitehall responds to clarity. Civil servants and ministers need a simple, investable story: what the region stands for, what problems it solves and who will deliver. Suffolk is known for operational delivery, but not yet for strategic leadership. A unified regional narrative, aligned with national outcomes, can elevate Suffolk from participant to policy partner.

Suffolk's Distinctive Edge

Suffolk stands out by combining nationally significant opportunities and capabilities across clean energy, ACT, ports and logistics and agri-food and drink.

While other regions may also demonstrate strength in these sectors, Suffolk offers a uniquely differentiated expertise. For instance, Suffolk's clean energy capabilities emphasise diverse energy generation, whereas the West Midlands excel in smart energy systems.

This differentiation underscore Suffolk's distinctive blend of specialism, as well as highlight the potential to connect and complement capabilities with other regions, creating collaborative opportunities that could amplify national impact.



Mission 1:
Power Clean Growth
Driving The UK's Green Transition

Core Cluster: Clean Energy | **Enablers:** Construction, Advanced Manufacturing, Environmental Science, Digital and Technology

Suffolk is the engine room of the UK's clean energy transition, hosting one of the largest concentrations of energy infrastructure projects in the country. From the Sizewell nuclear power stations to the East Anglia Array of offshore wind farms, Suffolk is already a clean energy superpower. Emerging hydrogen production hubs at the Ports of Lowestoft and Felixstowe and growing potential in bioenergy further strengthen this position.

Combined with strategic advantages such as port access and digital innovation assets like Adastral Park, Suffolk is uniquely placed to spearhead the UK's mission to be a clean energy superpower. The East of England collectively could power 67% of UK homes by 2035, and Suffolk sits at the heart of this opportunity.

To achieve this mission, Suffolk must strengthen its clean energy cluster, leveraging its leadership in clean energy generation, which spans offshore wind, nuclear, hydrogen, solar and bioenergy. Critically, Suffolk must also develop capabilities in energy storage and smart systems to secure its position at the forefront of the clean transition.

Key Opportunities:

Become the UK's Leading Hub for Energy NSIPs:

Suffolk has a unique opportunity to lead in clean energy delivery across construction, operations, maintenance and decommissioning. Strengthen supply chains, workforce development and commercialisation support for cutting-edge technologies so Suffolk can capture more local value, export expertise nationally and cement its role as a leader for clean energy NSIPs.

Cultivate an Innovation Ecosystem for the Green Transition:

Transform Suffolk into a national incubator for clean energy solutions by fostering visible collaboration between industry and research institutions such as Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), University of Suffolk, and UEA. Create compelling programmes and facilities—such as testbeds—to attract innovators and accelerate next-generation clean energy technologies.

Scalable Models for Net Zero Communities:

Pioneer local energy systems combining clean energy, digital technologies and community-led governance to create resilient, net zero towns. Net Zero Leiston is already a proven model, with potential to scale across the East of England and beyond.

Lead the UK's Energy Security through Diverse Clean Energy Portfolio:

Diverse energy sources will be critical for a future system resilience. Strengthen Suffolk's position as a clean energy leader by building on existing offshore wind and nuclear assets while advancing solar, hydrogen, bioenergy and alternative fuels. Capitalise on major projects such as Sunnica Energy Farm and hydrogen demonstrators in Lowestoft, Leiston and Felixstowe to ensure system resilience and future-proof energy security.

6m
homes powered by Sizewell C

14
NSIPS in development and an exapanding portfolio of O&M facilities

40%
of the UK's target of 40Gw offshore wind by 2023 will be delivered in the Southern North Sea

The East of England collectively could power
67%
of UK homes by 2035

Mission 2:
Sustain The Nation

Pioneering The Smart Countryside Revolution

Core Cluster: Agri-Food | **Enablers:** Environmental Science, Digital and Technology, Advanced Manufacturing

Suffolk is at the heart of the UK's most important food-producing region, along with Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire. Its established strengths in arable farming, food processing and agri-tech make it a cornerstone of domestic food security and supply chain resilience. Suffolk's geography of low-lying, drought-prone and diverse land types, creates both challenges and opportunities, positioning the county as an ideal testbed for water resilience, precision agriculture, and sustainable land management. The county benefits from world-class assets such as CEFAS, Adastral Park, and the SpaceEast network. These resources enable Suffolk to deploy advanced technologies like earth observation, satellite imaging and AI-powered analytics to monitor soil health, track crop stress and optimise water use.

Delivering this mission will require deep collaboration across Suffolk's agri-food ecosystem; from farmers and producers to research institutions and technology partners. Stronger coordination, knowledge exchange and alignment with complementary sectors such as digital and technology will be essential. In particular, there is a clear opportunity to grow innovation in agri-tech in the advanced manufacturing sector based on the recent Industrial Strategy highlighting this as a frontier industry. By leveraging these capabilities, and combining with expertise from the Norwich Research Park, the region can lead the development of smart, sustainable, tech-enabled rural economies that deliver growth, jobs, and environmental resilience.

Key Opportunities:

Boost Local Processing and Packaging:

Build capacity to keep more value in Suffolk, using Sizewell C as a catalyst for integrated supply chains and an "agri-hub" model to create new processing and packaging capability that provides legacy capability and jobs long after the completion of Sizewell C construction, enabling Suffolk to retain more of the economic value chain.

Lead in Water Resilience:

Position Suffolk as the UK testbed for water-efficient farming through pilot projects and satellite-enabled, data-driven solutions with partners like SpaceEast and CEFAS, opening up wider opportunities to exploit intellectual property rights from Suffolk's innovations in water management. This will support national goals on climate and food security, whilst embedding smart infrastructure across the countryside. Farms will use AI, sensors, and real-time analytics to optimise water use, creating a thriving ecosystem where productivity and environmental balance go hand in hand. Rivers, streams, and reservoirs will be continuously monitored, with data fed into digital twins that guide infrastructure investment and enable rapid responses to pollution and drought alerts.

Drive Collaboration:

Connect farmers, academia and industry via networks such as AgriTech-E and Tastebuds Collective, and partner with Norfolk's research hubs to create a unified regional innovation corridor. Examples for collaboration could include clean energy integration to decarbonise agriculture, supporting Suffolk's transition to low-carbon farming and food production; catalysing logistics and cold-chain innovation, improving food traceability and reducing waste through advanced storage and transport systems; strengthening advanced manufacturing capabilities, creating opportunities for precision agri-tech equipment and sustainable packaging solutions; accelerating digital transformation, deploying AI-powered analytics, sensors, and satellite imaging to optimise land use and water management.

1/3
of the UK's crops grown in the East of England

54%
more jobs than the England average

Home to CEFAS
world-leading research capabilities for marine biodiversity, aquatic animal health and food safety and security

"The larder for the UK"
Suffolk specialises in poultry, sugar, and horticulture

Mission 3:
Deliver Smart Logistics

Making Suffolk the Heart of Sustainable Trade

Core Cluster: Ports and Logistics | **Enablers:** Clean Energy, Digital and Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Construction

Suffolk connects the UK to the world. The Port of Felixstowe is the nation's largest container port, handling 37% of the UK's containerised trade, while the A14 corridor and Freeport East form vital trade links between the East Coast, the Midlands and the North. Together with Lowestoft, Gateway 14 and a growing network of logistics and industrial developments, Suffolk has become central to national competitiveness in trade, energy and supply-chain resilience.

However, Suffolk's logistics system remains under strain. Infrastructure bottlenecks, workforce shortages and weak integration with local supply chains mean the county is not yet realising the full value of its position. Too much economic benefit flows through Suffolk rather than being retained locally. This mission aims to change that by transforming Suffolk's logistics ecosystem into a connected, sustainable and innovation-driven platform that drives both national trade and local prosperity.

Suffolk's unique geography, clean-energy capacity and digital infrastructure make it an ideal location to pioneer the UK's transition to net-zero logistics. By integrating hydrogen and electric freight corridors, digitalised ports and automated warehousing systems, the county can become a national testbed for clean, intelligent and resilient freight.

Key Opportunities:

Hydrogen and Electric Freight Corridors:

Build a national model for low-carbon freight movement by connecting Felixstowe, Lowestoft and the Midlands through hydrogen and electric transport corridors. Integrate charging and refuelling infrastructure with clean-energy assets at Sizewell, Lowestoft and Freeport East to create a continuous, green freight route that supports both heavy logistics and last-mile distribution.

Digital and Automated Freight Systems:

Deploy digital-twin and AI-powered logistics platforms to create real-time visibility across ports, rail and road. Automation and predictive data analytics will improve freight flow, reduce congestion and enable smarter routing, emissions monitoring and maintenance scheduling. Suffolk's digital ecosystem at Adastral Park can anchor these developments and attract innovators in intelligent logistics systems. Leveraging on Suffolk's growing strengths in satellite communications, particularly in integrating terrestrial networks (TN) and non-terrestrial networks (NTN), will be critical to enhancing the region's smart logistics capabilities.

Logistics Innovation Zones and Hubs:

Develop live testing environments at sites such as Gateway 14 and Freeport East to pilot automation, low-emission vehicles and connected infrastructure. These hubs will support collaboration between technology providers, hauliers and manufacturers, strengthening Suffolk's reputation as the UK's clean logistics demonstrator.

Local Value Creation:

Retain more economic benefit from trade by developing logistics parks, processing facilities and digital control centres near ports. This will support SMEs and supply-chain diversification, stimulate new investment in warehousing and freight handling, and strengthen links with manufacturing and agrifood sectors.

Workforce and Skills Transformation:

Build a future-ready logistics workforce equipped for automation, digital operations and clean transport. The Skills and Innovation Hub at Gateway 14, alongside West Suffolk College and regional universities, will expand training pathways in data analysis, freight management and low-carbon operations, ensuring that Suffolk's residents benefit directly from this transformation.

13,500
new jobs generated by Freeport East

1/3
of the UK's containerised trade handled at the Port of Felixstowe

32%
more jobs in Suffolk than the England average

10%
of all road freight along the Green Freight Corridor between Freeport East and East Midlands Freeport to be **low or zero emission by 2030**

The Cluster Model: Translating Missions Into Impact

Delivering Suffolk's three missions demands a powerful vehicle to turn vision into impact. Cluster development is that vehicle. The missions will be delivered through four core clusters: clean energy, agri-food and drink, ports and logistics and ACT.

The first three clusters map directly to Suffolk's missions—Power Clean Growth, Sustain the Nation, and Deliver Smarter Places. Digital and technology acts as a cross-cutting enabler: a thread running through all three clusters that can unlock innovation and accelerate growth. At the core of Suffolk's digital and technology specialism is ACT, with Adastral Park anchoring this nationally significant leadership.

Together, these clusters form an interconnected ecosystem where clean energy powers logistics, digital infrastructure transforms agriculture, and local supply chains capture more value.

This focus does not diminish the role of enabling sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, construction, creative industries and education, which provide the foundation for cross-sector innovation. Rather, anchored in Suffolk's wider strengths, the clusters will serve as focal points for collaboration and investment, shaping a distinctive role for the county at regional and national level.

Three missions anchored in Suffolk's strengths

Powered by four core clusters

Activating Suffolk's Clusters: The Mission Catalyst

Clusters are not simply networks or concentrations of businesses; they are engines of collaboration where business, academia and government work deliberately around shared goals: our three missions. When clusters are designed and resourced effectively, they amplify Suffolk's assets, accelerate knowledge exchange and unlock solutions that no single organisation could achieve alone. This approach ensures that Suffolk's sectoral strengths work in concert, driving clean growth, digital transformation and sustainable prosperity across the county and beyond.

Activating Suffolk's clusters will require strong coordination and deliberate design. **Convenors** play an essential role in ensuring this. They are the organisations that foster collaboration, bringing together stakeholders such as academia, industry, SMEs, VCSEs and the public sector to drive sector or cluster-specific progress.

However, innovation rarely happens in isolation. Rather, it thrives at the intersection of different sectors working together. The convergence of technologies and the power of cross-sector collaboration will be critical to achieving Suffolk's three missions. Clean energy solutions will need digital technologies and advanced manufacturing; agrifood will require energy and data-driven systems; logistics will depend on AI and connectivity. These intersections are where cutting-edge and effective solutions emerge. However, these synergies do not occur by chance. They require deliberate coordination. That is the role of the **Mission Catalyst:** a cross-cutting connector that aligns priorities, pools resources and enables integrated solutions to accelerate mission delivery. Working alongside Convenors, the Mission Catalyst leverages diverse sectoral capabilities to amplify impact.

The Impact by 2035

Suffolk will be a national exemplar for mission-led growth, integrating economic performance, environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

Suffolk will lead the UK in powering clean growth, building smart countryside innovation and creating smart and sustainable logistics, anchored by thriving innovation clusters in agri-food, ports, clean energy and digital technologies.

Our clusters will scale regionally, anchoring Suffolk as the UK model for mission-led growth.

By embedding inclusion into every route, we will set the national standard for workforce diversity and shared economic prosperity.

We will ensure all our residents, regardless of their background, can access meaningful, high-quality careers in sectors critical to Suffolk and the UK's future resilience.

From our rural heartlands to our windswept coastlines to our green freight corridors, Suffolk will transform into a national testbed for mission-led innovation.

We will create an environment that will help SMEs test and scale mission-led innovations, co-developed with communities and industries, ensuring they address real challenges and deliver measurable impact for people and places in Suffolk.

What Success Looks Like For Our Stakeholders

Our businesses and entrepreneurs will have:

- ✓ Access to testbeds, funding and collaborative networks to accelerate innovation.
- ✓ Access to resilient supply chains and clear pathways to scale solutions nationally and globally.

Our researchers and academics will have:

- ✓ Direct access to industry partnership, real-world trials and opportunities to commercialise research.
- ✓ Access to regional, national and global platforms to showcase their expertise.

Our education and training providers will have:

- ✓ Clear routes to engagement with sector experts to provide industry-informed teaching.
- ✓ Strong support to provide high-quality careers education.

Our communities will have:

- ✓ Accessible opportunities to participate in co-creating solutions to Suffolk's challenges.
- ✓ Improved awareness of the benefits offered by mission-led clusters.

Our existing and future workforce will have:

- ✓ Access to high-quality, diverse training pathways.
- ✓ Visible routes into high-value careers in our core clusters.

Investors will have:

- ✓ Clear visibility of, and confidence in, growth opportunities within Suffolk's mission-led clusters.
- ✓ Structured routes to participate and collaborate with the Suffolk ecosystem.

Measuring Success

- No. of high-value jobs generated; No. of start-ups formed per cluster
- Total inward investment and venture capital attracted
- No. of SMEs supported to pilot mission-led solutions
- High Growth in Businesses
- Representation of underrepresented groups in cluster jobs
- Local involvement in co-design of solutions and net-zero initiatives
- Tonnes of CO_2 emissions avoided through cluster activities
- Water efficiency metrics; biodiversity improvements

Dashboard showing example metrics to measure the progress of cluster development activities. Please note that these are not exhaustive or final.

What Happens Next?

Next Phase Of The Work

Following approval of the Suffolk Cluster Development Plan, attention should turn to turning strategy into action. The next phase will focus on developing detailed implementation plans for activities set out in the Suffolk Cluster Intervention Cards, including clear governance and ownership, milestones, resource, costs and investment options.

Central to this will be communicating the recommendations of the study to rto relevant stakeholder within Suffolk and neighbouring counties. Given the forthcoming formation of an MCCA with Norfolk, proactive exploration of collaboration opportunities and cross-boundary synergies will also be a priority. This will ensure the missions and necessary interventions to enable clustering are positioned within a wider regional growth narrative, leveraging assets, complementary capabilities and joint investment opportunities across the region. This will ensure that the plan is 'Mayor-ready'.

As part of this, detailed engagement will be sustained with key stakeholders across industry, business, academia, Industrial Strategy Zones (e.g. Freeport East) and local authorities, to refine priorities, understand quick wins, strengthen alignment, and to foster shared ownership and accountability for delivery.

There are a number of funding mechanisms (existing and new) that will be deployed. For example, in the short term: the Local Innovation Partnership Fund (LIPF), the recommended Innovation Challenge Fund, and in due course, Freeport East's next round of funding calls (in partnership with Essex). Current calls should be reviewed as a matter of urgency in order to make sure that submitted proposals align with the missions and clusters to, if possible, secure short-term investment for the critical interventions upon which the clusters' success is contingent

Together these next steps will transition the innovation clusters from concept to execution, laying the foundations for a collaborative programme, anchoring long-term economic growth and innovation-led productivity across the region.

The 90-Day Playbook

The next 90 days will focus on activating the cluster development plan:

1. Communications plan and message palette (setting the groundwork for the incoming Mayor to understand how missions and clusters will be important in driving growth for Norfolk and Suffolk).

2. Design the Mission Catalyst (interim structure) with Suffolk Business Board leading the conversation.
   a. Kickstart discussion with Norfolk around mission catalyst.
   b. Establish individual cluster leadership teams where they are not set up yet e.g. ports and logistics.
   c. Convene all cluster leadership teams to raise awareness and start to advance the missions and plan.

3. Engage with wider East of England stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, industry) to raise awareness and establish areas for collaboration.

3. Funding strategy
   a. In the short-term, coordinate LIPF submission with this cluster development activity.
   b. Design the Innovation Challenge Fund – firm up design and mechanics of the fund (e.g. funding amount, sources, governance).
   c. Develop private sector investment prospectuses.
   d. Monitor relationship with emerging British Business Bank East of England fund for direct business funding (debt and equity).
   e. Continue to build relationships with investment communities in the region and beyond (notably angel networks, VC and private equity). Examples would include Anglia Capital Group, Angels at Essex and Foresight.

5. Understand the role that Suffolk's Industrial Strategy Zones can play in advancing the three missions and supporting development plans for the four core clusters.

6. Review and prioritise the intervention cards. Identify quick wins and establish where long-term efforts are required. Establish which interventions would sit directly within the new MCCA and which belong with other bodies.

Conclusion: Suffolk's Offer To The Nation

Suffolk's mission-led cluster development plan is not just about growth. It is about creating an integrated innovation ecosystem that sets a national benchmark for collaboration and impact. By aligning sectoral strengths with our missions and enabling cross-cluster synergy, Suffolk will operate as a living testbed for solutions that tackle real-world challenges at scale.

This approach ensures Suffolk is future-ready: a region where clean energy, smart logistics, digital technologies and agri-food innovation converge to deliver systemic change. Through bold partnerships, inclusive workforce development and community-led initiatives, Suffolk will demonstrate how regional ecosystems can drive both local and national priorities around net zero, resilience and productivity.

Our success will depend on bold partnerships, shared ambition and sustained investment. With Norfolk as a strategic partner and the MCCA providing a platform for alignment, Suffolk will lead the UK in proving that mission-driven innovation is not aspirational, it is actionable. This is how Suffolk will secure its place as a national exemplar for sustainable growth and inclusive prosperity.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Cluster	A connected ecosystem of diverse stakeholders, such as business, academia and public partners, working collaboratively within a sector to drive innovation, share knowledge and deliver solutions aligned with Suffolk's missions. Clusters may be geographically anchored to a specific area (e.g. Adastral Park) or distributed (e.g. Agri-Food and Drink).
Convenors	Organisations that lead and coordinate individual sectors or clusters, bringing diverse stakeholders together, fostering collaboration and ensuring clusters remain competitive and focused on sector-specific goals.
Mission	Strategic, long-term goal that addresses Suffolk's biggest challenges and anchored in its competitive advantages. The missions will guide innovation and investment across the different sectors.
Mission Catalyst	A connecting and coordinating function that drives cross-cluster collaboration, aligns priorities and leverages diverse sectoral capabilities to accelerate mission outcomes. It will oversee the design, development and deployment of cross-cluster interventions, such as the Innovation Challenge Fund.
Sector	A broad industry area of economic activity (e.g. agrifood, logistics, digital technologies, clean energy) that provides the foundation for cluster development and mission delivery.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