

Consultancy support for the delivery of a Visitor Economy Spatial Strategy for North East England

Context

The North East has set itself an ambitious target to double the value of the visitor economy over the next 10 years. Over the last four years the region has worked closely with Government to deliver the Destination Development Partnership pilot and has created a platform for accelerated growth.

To achieve our ambitions we want to harness the power of data to drive strategic investment, understand opportunities, identify gaps in provision and create cluster effect to support communities.

With that in mind we are looking for data driven solutions to help support the growth of the region's visitor economy.

Requirements

We would like to work with a consultant or consortium that can help us to understand the true picture of the visitor economy by developing spatial data that will help us with the following:

- An understanding of key areas such as accommodation proximity to major attractions
- Infrastructure needs (transport, digital, visitor facilities)
- Economic impact (job creation, business growth investment)
- Social impact (community engagement, skills development, quality of life)
- Environmental Sustainability and resilience
- Place branding and place layering

We are particularly interested to understand where we have gaps in specific parts of the visitor economy, i.e. attractions without nearby accommodation and where there are particular clusters of visitor economy businesses

This strategy will cover the seven local authority areas which form part of the North East Combined Authority and should cover the time period to 2035. It should also align with any emerging work of the region wide spatial strategy.

We are keen to understand the current mapping of the visitor economy to understand clustering and gaps.

We want this work to be living and to grow so we are particularly keen to hear from agencies, universities and others with a keen interest in data visualisation and the use of data in driving growth that can help us explore the true potential of this project.

Objectives and deliverables

The objectives of this work are to help us to:

1. Enhance connectivity across the region to improve visitor access and experience
2. Identify and prioritise investment zones for tourism infrastructure
3. Support inclusive growth by linking tourism to local employment and skills
4. Strengthen the regions identity through cultural, natural, and heritage assets
5. Promote sustainable tourism that's respects local communities and environments.

Deliverables we expect of this work are:

- Spatial analysis of current tourism assets and infrastructure
- Gap assessment and future needs mapping
- Stakeholder engagement Plan
- Investment and funding strategy
- Support with understanding what the data is telling us and how we communicate it to others
- Recommendations for other uses of the data – i.e. visitor facing opportunities

What will we do:

- Provide access to existing data, reports and relevant insight
- Facilitate introductions to key stakeholders including:
 - Local authorities and North East Combined Authority
 - Local tourism bodies (LVEPs and DMO teams)
 - Transport and Infrastructure bodies
 - Local businesses and investors
 - Community groups and cultural institutions
 - Relevant national agencies

Timescales

We would like to start this work immediately and are keen to look at phased approaches this work. We would ask that bidders provide blocks of work and what the outputs at each stage would be. As a minimum would want to be able to see clearly visualised data sets by February 2026 however we are keen to understand future possibilities for the project.

Budget

We have set a budget of £30,000 exc VAT to get this project started and will also provide in kind support via the provision of data and outreach. We are keen to hear from bidders as to what the true potential of this project can be and the associated costs and would also welcome suggestions from bidders on how other funding could be drawn down to grow the project

Tender deadline

We are seeking responses to this tender by 21st November 2025

Contact

Proposals should be sent to Ian Thomas, Chief Operating Officer
ian.thomas@ngi.org.uk Any questions regarding the tender should be directed to the same email address.