

Employment and Skills Delivery

Planning Application Ref: 23/01423/PREAPP

Proposal: Construction of a Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) for the generation, export, and storage of electricity exceeding 50 MW.

Introduction

Bassetlaw District Council remains committed to promoting local employment, skills development, and inclusive economic growth. The One Earth Solar Farm Project presents a significant opportunity to embed these priorities into a major infrastructure development that spans multiple local authority areas including Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood, West Lindsey, Lincolnshire County, and Nottinghamshire County Councils. Given the scale and complexity of this development, the Council strongly encourages the adoption of a comprehensive Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) managed collaboratively across all involved authorities.

Bassetlaw continues to experience entrenched challenges regarding skills attainment and inclusive employment. Qualification attainment at Level 4 and above remain below the national average, which restricts both economic growth and individual prosperity across the district. Tackling these challenges is a strategic priority for Bassetlaw District Council.

The Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020–2038, particularly Policy ST29, emphasises the vital role developers can play in promoting local employment and skills development and support the Council’s aim to grow a diverse, higher-value employment base supported by a skilled workforce.

As such, developers of major projects are expected to contribute meaningfully to this ambition through the delivery of robust Employment and Skills Plans (ESPs), creation of training opportunities, and collaboration with local stakeholders.

To maximise social and economic benefits, it is vital to establish clear commitments to local employment and training, particularly given the short construction phase and long operational life of the project.

1. Construction Phase

The development is projected to create up to 750 temporary Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) construction jobs over the two-year construction period, with up to 4,000 additional FTE roles within the wider value chain. While these opportunities are

welcomed, the temporary nature of the construction phase requires careful planning to ensure meaningful skills development. Key considerations include:

- Prioritising local recruitment to maximise employment for residents of Bassetlaw and neighboring districts.
- Ensuring the inclusion of apprenticeships and structured training programs, particularly in civil engineering, construction, electrical engineering, and power generation.
- Collaborating with local education and training providers to facilitate short courses, T-Level placements, and apprenticeships, mindful of the short duration of the construction phase.
- Addressing rural accessibility challenges for workers, particularly for those without private transport.
- Engaging with local DWP offices and employability providers to address economic inactivity and provide opportunities through Skills Bootcamps, SWAPs, and targeted training.

The Council expects all major projects to adopt the **CITB National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfC) Client-Based Approach**, embedding workforce development into project delivery. Key construction-phase expectations include:

- Prioritisation of local labour through early supply chain coordination and labour brokerage
- Short-term placements for NEETs, students, and adult learners (e.g. Skills Bootcamps)
- Work experience and curriculum-aligned visits with schools and colleges
- Creating Apprenticeship opportunities in construction and support roles

Benchmarks for these expectations are **detailed in Appendix 1 (Infrastructure Projects)**.

To support KPIs and demonstrate commitment to inclusive and responsible operations, contractors are encouraged to register with the Considerate Constructors Scheme.

2. Operational Phase

The operational phase will offer fewer direct employment opportunities, primarily in maintenance, land management, and technical roles. However, ongoing collaboration with local skills providers is essential to ensure that new roles are accessible and skills gaps are addressed proactively.

Establishing robust training partnerships early on will ensure long-term workforce readiness for the project's 60-year operational life.

While opportunities will be fewer than the construction phase (and numbers of FTEs are not clearly expressed within the provided documentation) there will be valuable opportunities for:

- Local inclusive employment, especially among NEETs, people with disabilities, and other priority groups
- Apprenticeship starts and completions across technical and professional sectors
- Industry-recognised qualifications NEBOSH, CMI/ILM, BTEC's etc.
- Training partnerships with Jobcentre Plus and local education and training providers

While roles new roles are welcome we would encourage further breakdown of what could be available either for entry roles / career changers, and if roles could be full-time / part-time, permanent or temporary, and how they will be distributed across skill levels.

The planning documentation currently lacks detail on partnerships with local FE providers, training bodies, or employment support organisations. Stronger engagement in this area will help the developer promote inclusion and maximise impact.

Operational employment and skills expectations are **outlined in Appendix 2**, with Key Performance Indicators applicable from the point of opening and extending for a period of three years.

The developer should provide a breakdown of roles and confirm inclusion of structured development pathways (e.g. internal progression, qualifications) in their operator workforce plans.

3. ESP Recommendations

To ensure sustained local benefit, the Council recommends the developer adopt an ESP which includes:

- Clear targets for local recruitment and skills development, both during construction and operation.
- Specific commitments to apprenticeship starts and completions, including structured pathways for progression to higher-level qualifications.

- Engagement with local education providers to co-design relevant training and ensure pipeline continuity.
- Monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure transparent delivery against key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Regular collaboration with the host local authorities to adapt the ESP to changing economic conditions or emerging skills needs.

4. Monitoring and Management of the Employment and Skills Plan

To ensure accountability, Bassetlaw District Council expects the developer to commit to regular monitoring and reporting of progress against the ESP.

Given the project's scale and its coverage across several local authority areas (Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood, West Lindsey, Lincolnshire County, and Nottinghamshire County Councils), it is crucial that the monitoring and reporting framework is designed to accommodate multi-authority oversight. Additionally, Bassetlaw District Council reserves the right to levy a monitoring and support fee to cover the costs associated with coordinating multi-authority engagement and oversight. Fees would be calculated based on weighted officer time plus oncosts to ensure the provision of effective support and compliance management.

The fee would cover

- Collection, review, and evaluation of data
- Ongoing technical advice and support
- Site visits and engagement meetings
- Brokering links with local education and training providers
- Coordination with the local authority lead Skills & Employment Boards / groups to connect stakeholders
- Delivery of careers events and wider social value activity

This approach ensures the plan delivers lasting benefits aligned with the Local Plan and supports inclusive growth in the district.

Quarterly updates should be submitted to the Employment and Skills Working Group, which must include representatives from each of the affected authorities to ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach. This collaborative monitoring will facilitate the consistent tracking of employment, training, and skills outcomes, while allowing each authority to address any area-specific challenges in a timely manner.

5. Summary

The development has the potential to significantly benefit local communities, but these benefits will only be fully realised through a proactive and collaborative approach to employment and skills planning. The Council strongly urges the developer to embed these principles into the project from the outset, fostering long-term socio-economic gains while supporting the transition to a sustainable energy future.

To achieve these benefits, the developer and their partners should:

- Commit to a CITB-aligned Employment and Skills Plan
- Prioritise local recruitment and inclusive hiring
- Deliver apprenticeships and structured in-work training
- Actively partner with schools, colleges, and job service
- Monitor and report delivery throughout construction and operation phases
- Agree to the monitoring fee to fund long-term oversight

The Growth and Economic Prosperity Team remains available to support the developer in shaping and delivering a plan that aligns with the district's wider goals for growth, inclusion, and place-based prosperity.

Tim Gladman

Employment and Skills Manager

Growth and Economic Prosperity Service - Bassetlaw District Council

Appendix 1

Benchmarks for Infrastructure projects

KPI			Band 2 £3.5-6m			Band 4 £10-15m			Band 6 £20-30m			Band 8 £40-50m			Band 10 £60-70m			Band 12 £80-90m									
	Band 1 £1-3.5m				Band 3 £6-10m				Band 5 £15-20m				Band 7 £30-40m				Band 9 £50-60m				Band 11 £70-80m				Band 13 £90-100m		
	£1m	£2.25m	£3.5m	£4.75m	£6m	£8m	£10m	£12.5m	£15m	£17.5m	£20m	£25m	£30m	£35m	£40m	£45m	£50m	£55m	£60m	£65m	£70m	£75m	£80m	£85m	£90m	£95m	£100m
Work Placements (people)	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Jobs created (number)	0	0	1	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	10
CCIAG events (number)	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6
Training weeks on site (weeks)	7	16	24	33	42	56	70	87	105	123	140	175	211	246	280	315	350	386	421	456	491	526	561	597	632	667	702
Qualifying the Workforce (Qualification /certification achieved)	3	4	5	5	6	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18	20	21	21	21	22	23	23	24	24
Qualifications gained (equiv. NVQ2 and above)	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	8	9	9	9	10	10	10
Industry certification gained	2	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	7	7	8	9	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	13	13	13	13	14	14	14	14
Green Skills training – (person-hours)	25	57	89	121	152	203	254	317	381	444	508	635	762	889	1,016	1,143	1,270	1,397	1,524	1,651	1,778	1,905	2,032	2,159	2,286	2,413	2,540

Appendix 2

Employment and Skills Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the development relate to Project cost Bands 'A' to 'E': **Band 'A'**: £1m–£5m, **Band 'B'**: £5m–£10m, **Band 'C'**: £10m–£20m, **Band 'D'**: £20m–£50m, **Band 'E'**: £50m+

Employment Outcomes:

1. Local Employment	
<i>Definition: The proportion of the total workforce <u>recruited</u> from within the local authority area or nearby communities.</i>	
<i>Example: Hiring local engineers, maintenance, electricians and support staff who live within a 20-mile radius of the development site.</i>	
<i>Timescale: Within the first 3 years of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	5% of total workforce
Band B:	7.5% of total workforce
Band C:	10% of total workforce
Band D:	12.5% of total workforce
Band E:	15% of total workforce

2. Job Creation (Training / development roles)	
<i>Definition: The total number of <u>new</u>, permanent, full-time equivalent (FTE) positions created as a direct result of the development.</i>	
<i>Example: Creating new engineers, maintenance, electricians and support staff etc. opportunities directly or within the supply chain within a 20-mile radius of the development site.</i>	
<i>Timescale: Within the first 3 years of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	5% of total workforce
Band B:	7.5% of total workforce
Band C:	10% of total workforce
Band D:	12.5% of total workforce
Band E:	15% of total workforce

3. Work Experience Placements (2-week placements)	
<i>Definition: Short-term opportunities for students, jobseekers, or career changers to gain hands-on experience in a real working environment. Minimum of 70 hours in the workplace over the course of the placement.</i>	
<i>Example: Offering two-week placements for local college students to shadow Main Contractors, Sub-contractors and Suppliers to learn practical skills.</i>	
<i>Timescale: Annually over the first 3 years of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	2 placements
Band B:	4 placements
Band C:	6 placements

Band D:	10 placements
Band E:	15 placements

4. Apprenticeship Starts	
<i>Definition: The number of individuals beginning formal apprenticeship programs within the development's operational phase.</i>	
<i>Example: Enrolling new apprentices in across technical disciplines</i>	
<i>Timescale: Within the first 18 months of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	1 start
Band B:	2 starts
Band C:	4 starts
Band D:	6 starts
Band E:	10 starts

5. Apprenticeship Completions	
<i>Definition: The number of apprentices who successfully complete their training programs and achieve recognised qualifications.</i>	
<i>Example: Completing an entry Level 2 / Level 3 or technical / managerial Level 5 + .</i>	
<i>Timescale: Within 3 years, depending on apprenticeship level and duration</i>	
Band A:	1 completion
Band B:	2 completions
Band C:	3 completions
Band D:	4 completions
Band E:	6 completions

6. Training Hours Delivered (Industry-Recognised Training)	
<i>Definition: The total number of hours dedicated to formal training that leads to industry-recognized qualifications or certifications.</i>	
<i>Example: Delivering NEBOSH, HND, BTEC, CMI/ILM (or associated) etc development programs.</i>	
<i>Timescale: Annually over the first 3 years of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	50 hours
Band B:	100 hours
Band C:	200 hours
Band D:	500 hours
Band E:	1000 hours

Community Engagement:

7. School/College Engagement Sessions	
<i>Definition: Interactive sessions delivered in educational institutions to promote career opportunities and pathways in logistics and related fields.</i>	
<i>Example: Hosting career talks, site visits, or mentoring sessions at local schools and colleges.</i>	
<i>Timescale: Annually over the first 3 years of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	1 session
Band B:	2 sessions
Band C:	4 sessions
Band D:	6 sessions
Band E:	10 sessions

8. Careers Fairs/Outreach Events Participated	
<i>Definition: Participation in job fairs and community events to promote employment opportunities and raise awareness of the logistics sector.</i>	
<i>Example: Attending local job fairs and presenting employment opportunities at community outreach events.</i>	
<i>Timescale: Annually over the first 3 years of operational phase</i>	
Band A:	1 event
Band B:	2 events
Band C:	4 events
Band D:	6 events
Band E:	10 events