



Lime Down

Solar Park

Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (Tracked)

~~September 2025~~

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Schedule of Changes

<u>Revision</u>	<u>Section Reference</u>	<u>Description of Changes</u>	<u>Reason for Revision</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Paragraph 1.2.1</u>	<u>Amended reference to updated threshold in the Planning Act 2008.</u>	<u>Updated for Deadline 1 of Examination to align with the latest generating threshold in the Planning Act 2008.</u>
	<u>Paragraph 6.3.1</u>	<u>Added further detail regarding engagement with external stakeholders on the Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan.</u>	<u>Updated for Deadline 1 of Examination in response to the Wiltshire Council's Relevant Representation.</u>

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1.1 This Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP) sets out how Lime Down Solar Park Limited (the Applicant) will commit to promoting competition, innovation and skills within the communities surrounding Lime Down Solar Park (hereafter referred to as ‘the Scheme’) and across the wider local authority areas of Wiltshire Council and South Gloucestershire Council (as the ‘host authorities’), and the neighbouring Bath and North East Somerset Council, Cotswold District Council, Somerset Council¹, Stroud District Council, and Swindon Borough Council. The Outline SSCEP describes the potential workers, skills, equipment and services required to deliver the Scheme and the measures required to engage with relevant stakeholders.
- 1.1.2 A final SSCEP will be prepared and submitted in accordance with this Outline SSCEP prior to the commencement of construction activities and is secured by a requirement in the **draft Development Consent Order (DCO) [EN010168/APP/3.1]** for the Scheme. The final SSCEP will be submitted for approval by Wiltshire Council as the discharging authority in direct consultation with South Gloucestershire Council.
- 1.1.3 The final SSCEP will identify opportunities relating to Skills, Supply Chain and Employment (SSCE) which the Applicant commits to taking forward post-consent, in accordance with this outline document. These activities will help local individuals and businesses access the SSCE benefits associated with the Scheme.
- 1.1.4 **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** assesses the likely significant effects of the Scheme on the population and socio-economic environment during the construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases of the Scheme. Therefore, details of the likely significant economic effects and information on the context and characteristics of the local and regional communities can be understood therein **[EN010168/APP/6.1]**.
- 1.1.5 This outline report may be subject to minor amendments as part of the examination stage of the DCO application process, with any amendments agreed between the Applicant and the host local authorities, and decided by the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net

¹ Somerset Council unitary authority was formed on 1 April 2023 by the merger of Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, and Somerset West and Taunton. Where data sources from prior to 2023 are used, Mendip is the only of these former districts from which data will be used, as it is the only former council area in Somerset that the 20 km Study Area for socio-economics falls within.

Zero (DESNZ). Finalisation and implementation of the SSCEP will thereafter be drafted substantially in accordance with the agreed Outline SSCEP and will be subject to approval from the Wiltshire Council as the relevant discharging authority.

1.2 The Scheme

- 1.2.1 The Scheme comprises the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facility of over ~~50~~100 megawatts (MW) and associated development comprising an approximately 500 MW export capacity Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), substations, grid connection infrastructure and other infrastructure integral to the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases. The Scheme will generate and store renewable electricity for export to the National Grid.
- 1.2.2 The PV electricity generating station and BESS would be located within five land parcels referred to as Lime Down A, B, C, D and E (hereafter collectively referred to as the 'Solar PV Sites') (refer to **ES Volume 2, Figure 3-1: Indicative Site Layout Plan [EN010168/APP/6.2]**). The Solar PV Sites are to be connected to the Existing National Grid Melksham Substation, via a Cable Route Corridor within which the export connection cables rated up to 400 kV would run.
- 1.2.3 The operational life of the Scheme is anticipated to be up to 60 years. Once the Scheme ceases to operate, the development will be decommissioned. The Solar PV Panels, mounting piles, cabling, inverters, transformers, switchgear, substations and BESS will be decommissioned and removed at the end of the lifetime of the Scheme, but the underground cables may be decommissioned in situ to minimise environmental impacts.

1.3 Structure of this Document

- 1.3.1 The document hereafter is set out as follows:
- Section 2 provides the economic baseline, summarising the existing local and regional employment and economic characteristics, and categorising the existing demographic profile of the working age population in the relevant impact areas. This will aim to highlight areas where substantial improvements can be focused.
 - Section 3 details the scale and nature of likely significant economic effects associated with the Scheme, which this document aims to beneficially maximise. These effects will be demonstrated across the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme.

- Section 4 summarises the aims of local and national planning policy and guidance to promote economic development, in the context of the relevant legislative requirements and industry standards.
- Section 5 identifies ways for the Scheme to maximise opportunities to promote economic benefits in relation with skills, supply chains, and employment.
- Section 6 gives outline details on the proposed approach to delivery of the SSCEP following the grant of DCO and presents a framework for engagement with key stakeholders and a timeframe for the Plan's implementation.
- Section 7 outlines a potential monitoring framework, including target outputs and outcomes, and a draft mechanism for ensuring the implementation and reporting of employment welfare and safeguarding.

2 Economic Baseline

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 This section summarises the economic characteristics of the local population and workforce to identify if there are any local and regional disparities which the Applicant may be able to target and help improve the local areas.

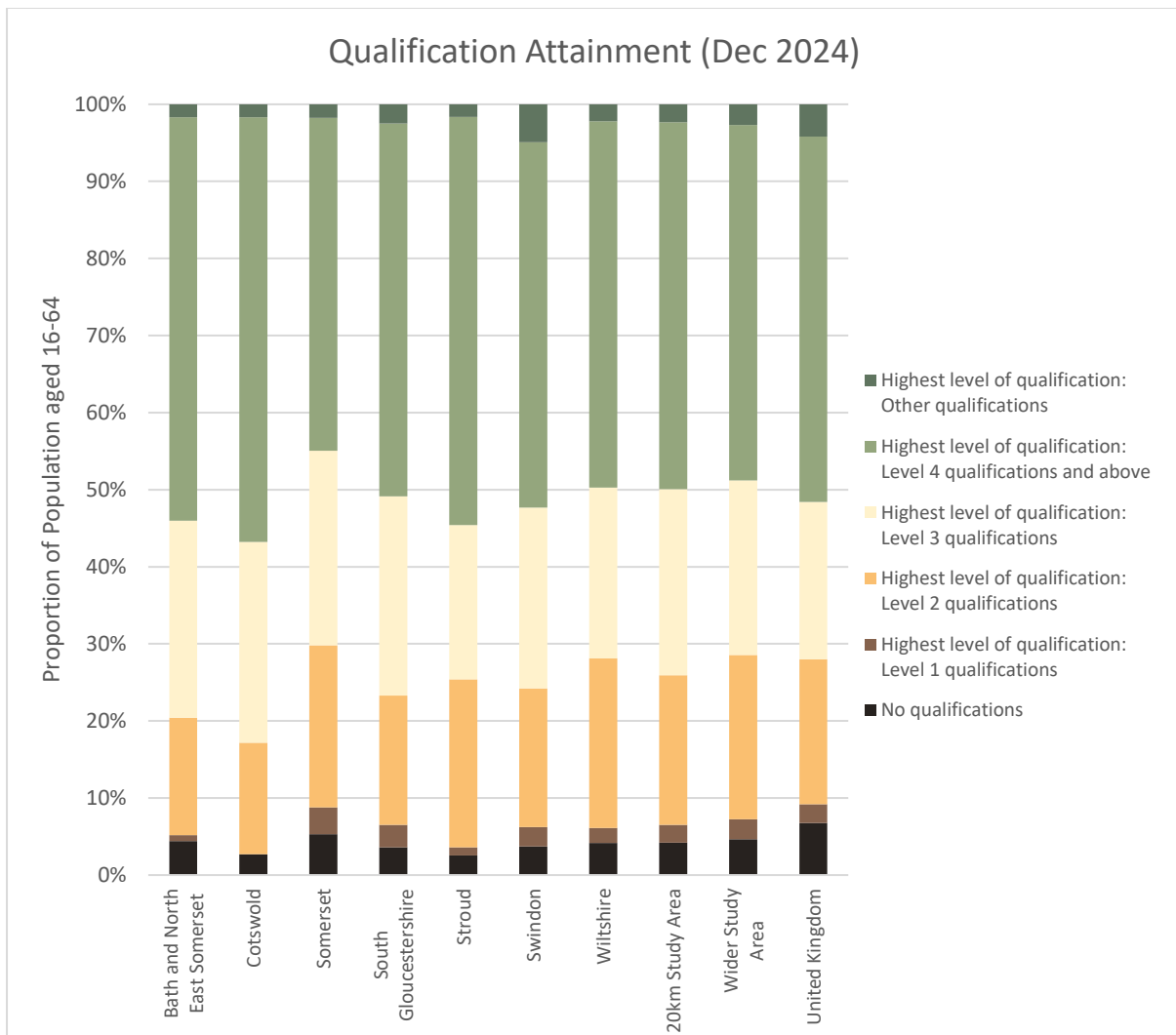
2.1.2 It should be read in conjunction with **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]**, which defines the “Study Area” for likely significant socio-economic effects as the geographic area within 20 km of the outermost extent of the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor. This area includes part of each of the local authority areas of Bath and North East Somerset Council, Cotswold District Council, Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council, Stroud District Council, Swindon Borough Council, and Wiltshire Council.

2.2 Population

2.2.1 The 20 km Study Area for socio-economics had a combined population of 728,300 in 2021 (Ref 1, Ref 2). As of 2021, the 20 km Study Area has an age profile that has a lower proportion of children, and greater proportion of people over 65 than the national population age profile (Ref 3).

2.2.2 The proportion of the population between the ages 16 to 64 years old in the 20 km Study Area achieving no qualifications varies from 2.6% to 5.3%, with the resultant rate of 4.2%, which is somewhat lower than the regional rates for the Wider Study Area (4.7%) and the UK national rate (6.8%) (Ref 4). Attainment of NVQ Level 4 and higher qualifications is also widely varied across the 20 km Study Area, ranging from 43.2% to 55.1% (Ref 4). Across the 20 km Study Area, the overall rate of Level 4 and higher qualifications stands at about 47.6%, compared to 46.1% in the Wider Study Area, and 47.2% across the UK (Ref 4). This can be seen in more detail in **Plate 1** below.

Plate 1: Qualification Attainment Rate in ages 16-64 as of December 2024



2.2.3 The population of the 20 km Study Area (Ref 5) is less likely than the national average in England to be deprived of access to suitable education and skills attainment, however this is not consistent, with Swindon Borough having far greater levels of deprivation in access to suitable education and skills attainment. Barriers to accessing services vary widely, and are prevalent in many of the district areas contributing to an average performance overall, with Cotswold performing poorest of the areas in the 20 km Study Area. The 20 km Study Area overall performs better than the national average with respect to overall deprivation, with [Bath and North East Somerset](#), [South Gloucestershire](#) and [Stroud](#) having a better than national performance in all measured indices of deprivation. Whilst there are notable deprivation inequalities present within the Study Area, particularly between rural and urban areas, the Scheme's Order

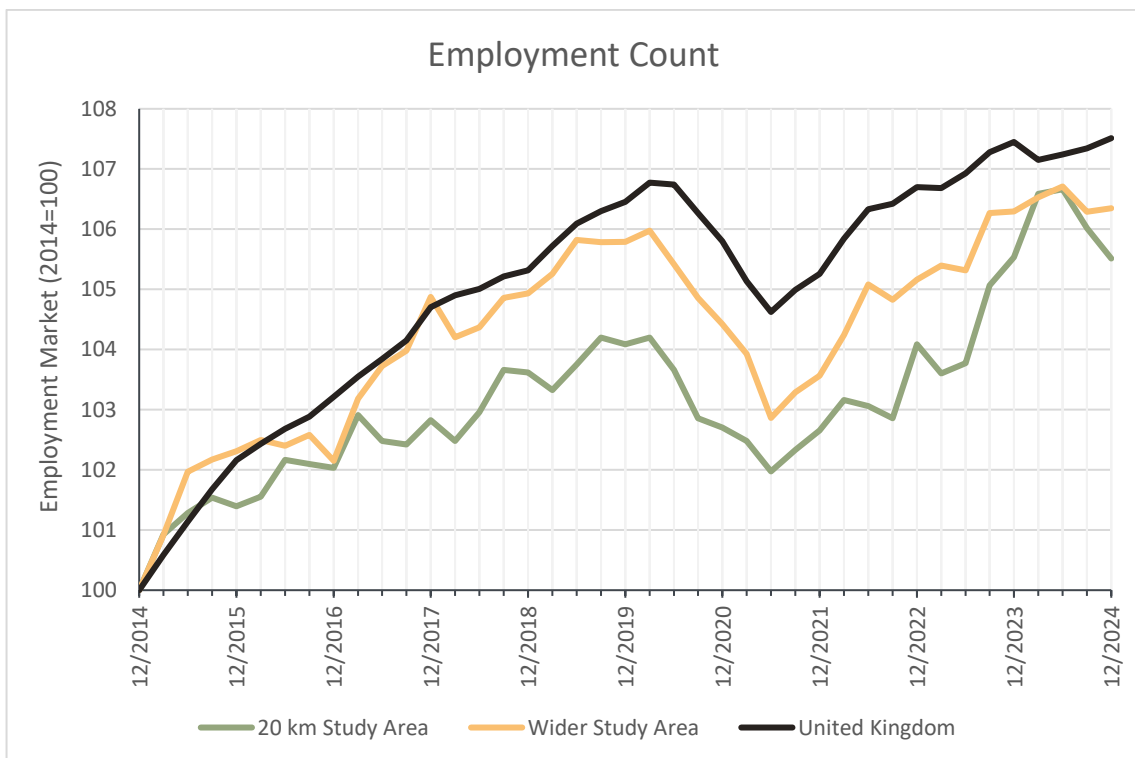
Limits (with the exception of a single Highway Improvement Area in Tomarton) fall within Lower Super Output Areas that are in the ~~30~~⁵⁰% least deprived neighbourhoods in England (Ref 6).

2.3 Workforce

2.3.1 The economically active population is defined as the members of the working age individuals (16 to 64-year-olds) in employment, seeking a job and who can work.

2.3.2 The number of economically active residents in the Study Area who are in employment has fluctuated considerably but has largely trended with regional trends in the South West (defined in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** as the 'Wider Study Area') and national trends the UK (Ref 7). This trend can be seen in **Plate 2** below.

Plate 2: Employment Count 2014-2024 related to 2014 baseline



2.3.3 For residents within the 20 km Study Area, the approximated median annual gross salary for full-time workers (in 2024) was £38,000 (Ref 8). For workers within the 20 km Study Area, the approximated median annual gross salary for full-time employment (in 2024) was somewhat lower at £36,000 (Ref 9). This difference between resident and workplace median pay indicates that it is likely that a proportion of employees may

travel outside the 20 km Study Area to access higher-paid work, or that lower-paid workers are more likely to travel into the area. There were also disparities within the 20 km Study Area, with those living in Cotswold earning significantly more than those in the Mendip area of Somerset, but conversely those working in South Gloucestershire earning significantly more than those working in Cotswold. The average salaries for those living in the 20 km Study Area are comparable to the UK median salary (£37,400), albeit workers in the 20 km Study Area earn somewhat less than the UK median salary.

3 Economic Effects

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section summarises the economic conditions and employment opportunities that may arise with the Scheme during its construction, operational, and decommissioning phases. It also summarises the type of jobs, skills, equipment, and materials required for the delivery of the Scheme.

3.1.2 This section should be read in conjunction with **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]**.

3.2 Construction

3.2.1 The Scheme will create a considerable number of employment and economic opportunities during construction. These will be as a result of direct construction-sector employment, indirect uplifts to supply chains for site equipment, machinery and related skills such as earth working and security, and through induced spending in the wider economy. These will have a positive ripple effect on other socio-economic factors such as wages, unemployment, and deprivation as a result of increased access to employment.

3.2.2 The construction of the Scheme is proposed to be phased over a two-year period.

3.2.3 The estimated labour requirement for the Scheme over the projected construction period is equivalent to a gross 268 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees per annum, with the estimated onsite construction workforce expected to peak at approximately 692 employees in the middle of the construction period.

3.2.4 As the Scheme would require a large skilled workforce it would provide employment opportunities to the Study Area and benefit young professionals with training opportunities to develop their skills and achieve qualifications. The Scheme will also help to upskill local labourers and to find work for disadvantaged individuals. Based on 2023 Business Register and Employment Survey (Ref 10) results in the 20 km Study Area indicate a total of 280 workers directly in the “42.2: Construction of Utility Projects” industry. There may be need for specialist employment to be sourced from outside the 20 km Study Area where particular skillsets cannot be sourced locally. A precautionary judgement has been applied that a minimum of 25% of the Scheme’s FTE employees are likely to need to be sourced from outside the Study Area.

- 3.2.5 The size of the local economy can be measured using Gross Value Added (GVA), which measures the value of goods and services in a given area (Ref 11).
- 3.2.6 The local economy will be positively impacted during the construction phase through the creation of jobs, such as construction workers, site managers, and delivery drivers. Of which, the workforce significantly contributes to the GVA of the Scheme. In total, the net direct GVA of the Scheme's construction is estimated to be approximately £20.3 million per annum. A maximum of approximately 78% of the GVA generated by the Scheme will be retained within the 20 km Study Area. This equates to a £15.7 million GVA per annum increase in the 20 km Study Area. This is based on the estimated GVA per worker for construction industry employees (Ref 10, Ref 11), based on 75% of the Scheme's FTE construction labour being sourced from within the Study Area, with economic "leakage" of the remaining 25% going to the rest of the UK.
- 3.2.7 In addition to the direct employment generated by construction, the Scheme is anticipated to support an estimated further 1.33 employees per direct FTE employee per annum through indirect employment in the construction industry supply chain, and through induced economic impacts of increased spending by employees and suppliers on local goods and services. This multiplier is based on the findings of CEBR in their 2014 report for the Solar Trade Association (Ref 12).
- 3.2.8 Therefore, the Scheme is estimated to have a further GVA of £13.6 million per annum through supply chains, local manufacturing, and induced benefits through additional spending by workers and their families in the local economy. An estimated £10.2 million of this indirect and induced GVA uplift is anticipated to be retained within the 20 km Study Area.
- 3.2.9 The direct, indirect and induced economic benefits of the Scheme therefore are likely to total £33.9 million of GVA uplift per annum, £25.9 million of which are anticipated to be retained within the 20 km Study Area. Once secondary impacts (those not linked to the construction workforce, suppliers, and their collective spending within the Study Area) on the agricultural sector, accommodation and services sector, and tourism and recreation economy have been considered, the net change in GVA to the 2023-baseline economy within the 20 km Study Area is estimated to be an uplift of £23.7 million GVA per annum during construction.

3.3 Operation and Maintenance

- 3.3.1 The ongoing workforce associated with the operation and maintenance of the Scheme throughout the Scheme's operation and maintenance phase

is likely to be limited to replacement and maintenance workers, and landscaping teams. Site monitoring and security is anticipated to be operated remotely.

- 3.3.2 The **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]** also applies for the provision of a peak replacement scenario within which all onsite Solar PV Panels and BESS batteries could be replaced in a 12-month period. During this period, an estimated gross 125 FTE employees per annum would be required, with the estimated onsite replacement workforce expected to peak at approximately 360 workers.

3.4 Decommissioning

- 3.4.1 The decommissioning of the Scheme is expected to take approximately two years at the end of the operational life of the Scheme, and will commence no later than the year 2089.
- 3.4.2 For the purposes of this assessment, the estimated number of workers required to undertake the decommissioning of the Scheme will be 80% of the workforce required for construction. Therefore, the Scheme would require a skilled labour force that would again provide employment opportunities to the 20 km Study Area and benefit young professionals with training opportunities to develop skills and achieve qualifications.
- 3.4.3 Similarly to the construction phase, the Scheme is likely to bring about a positive indirect boost to the local economy and employment through additional spending and services required by workers and their families.
- 3.4.4 An **Outline Decommissioning Strategy [EN010168/APP/7.14]** will be submitted as part of the DCO application, following which a detailed Decommissioning Strategy or Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan will be produced substantially in the form of the Outline Decommissioning Strategy and submitted for approval by Wiltshire Council as the discharging authority in consultation with South Gloucestershire Council, closer to the commencement of the decommissioning phase of the Scheme.

3.5 Job and Skill Requirements

- 3.5.1 The types of jobs and skills that are likely to be required during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme have been detailed in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
Construction	Civil Engineering Workers	Preparation of the Solar PV Sites. Work includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excavation using an appropriately sized tracked excavator; The removal and storage of topsoil and levelling of the land as required; Preparation and build of any access roads, internal to the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor and for access onto and away from the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor; The digging of trenches for cabling; and Preparation for and laying foundations for the inverters, onsite substations and BESS. 	Use of machinery, such as dump trucks, diggers and compactors. Use of cranes to lift the components into position.
	Labourers	Labour to place cabling and ducting in the trenches and to transport materials as required around the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor.	No specific qualifications required.
	Building Construction	Labour to build the temporary storage sheds. Labour to build substation control and relay buildings.	Relevant construction qualifications required.
	Racking Structure Assembler	Manage a ramming or screw-piling machine to create the solar structure and assemble the associated structure.	Skilled workers required to control the ramming or screw-piling machines. Less skilled workers required to assemble other components of the structures.
	Panel Assembler	Individuals to manage the process of mounting the solar modules onto the structures.	Knowledge of electromechanics tools required.
	Electrical Engineering and Cabling	Connecting the panels with inverters, to onsite substations and transformers and to the network grid.	Skills for cabling and installation of equipment required.

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	Cable Construction using trenches	Preparation of the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Work includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excavation using an appropriately sized tracked excavator; The removal and storage of topsoil; The trench will be cleared and bottomed out; Sand bedding will be installed at the bottom; and Cable installation will follow behind excavation. 	Skill of using an excavator to remove layers of topsoil to produce trenches.
	Cable Construction using horizontal directional drilling (trenchless cabling technique)	Preparation of the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Work includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch and reception pits will be excavated using a suitable excavator; Work will then commence on the initial drill; The bore will then be drilled to a size to accept the duct; and The pipe will then be installed. 	Relevant qualifications and accreditations required to operate horizontal directional drilling that includes NVQ Directional Drilling Level 1 and 2.
	Security Guards	Protecting the Solar PV Sites and construction compounds during the construction process.	Protect the security of the Scheme during construction.
	CCTV Workers	Setting up the security system.	Installation of CCTV system and equipment.
	Fencing Installation Workers	Installation of the perimeter fencing including any gates for access.	Installation of fencing.
	Landscape Installation Workers	Installation of all landscaping such as planting.	Installation of the landscaping works area.
	Delivery drivers	Drivers to deliver equipment and supplies to the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor.	Appropriate driving license required.
Operations	Electrical Engineers	To monitor and trouble-shoot any problems.	Low Voltage (LV), Medium Voltage (MV), and High

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
			Voltage (HV) electrical specialists required.
	Performance Managers	To monitor and trouble-shoot any problems via software remotely from the office.	Skills and qualifications in software engineering.
	CCTV and Security	To monitor security of the Solar PV Sites and construction compounds.	Protect the security of the Scheme.
	Landscape Monitoring and Managers	To deliver watering strategy and monitor and maintain the landscape/ecology areas within the Scheme.	Knowledge and skills in ecology and landscaping.
Decommissioning	Civil Engineering Workers	Work includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and build of any access roads, internal to the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor and for access onto and away from the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor; • The digging of trenches for removal of cabling; and • Removal of foundations for the solar stations, onsite substations and BESS. • Earthworks required for site restoration works. 	Use of machinery, such as dump trucks, diggers and compactors.
	Labourers	Labour to remove cabling and ducting in the trenches and to transport materials as required from the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor.	No specific qualifications required.
	Building Construction	Labour to build the temporary storage sheds. Labour to demolish substation control and relay buildings.	Relevant construction qualifications required.
	Racking Structure Contractor	Manage a pile extraction or screw-piling machine to remove the solar structure.	Skilled workers required to control the pile extraction or screw-piling machines. Less skilled workers required to disassemble other components of the structures.
	Panel Contractor	Individuals to manage the process of decommissioning and removing the solar modules from the structures.	Knowledge of electromechanics tools required.

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	Electrical Engineering and Cabling	Decommissioning of electrical infrastructure including cabling, inverters, onsite substations and transformers.	Skills for cabling and removal of equipment required.
	Cable Construction using trenches	Work includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excavation using an appropriately sized tracked excavator; • The removal and storage of topsoil; • Cabling and cable ducting and sheathing to be cleared out; and • Backfilling of decommissioned trenches. 	Skill of using an excavator to remove layers of topsoil to produce trenches and restore land.
	Security Guards	Protecting the Solar PV Sites and decommissioning compounds during the decommissioning process.	Protect the security of the Solar PV Sites and decommissioning compounds during decommissioning.
	CCTV Workers	Decommissioning the security system.	Removal of CCTV system and equipment.
	Fencing Installation Workers	Installation of any temporary perimeter fencing including any gates for access at worker compounds. Removal of all other fencing and enclosure structures.	Installation of fencing. Removal of all other fencing and enclosure structures.
	Waste and Contamination Specialist	Sorting of decommissioned materials for reuse, recycling, or disposal. Containment and restoration of any potential contaminants released during decommissioning activities.	Understanding of reuse and recycling capabilities of decommissioned infrastructure. Training for contaminant containment and restoration measures.
	Delivery drivers	Drivers to deliver equipment and supplies to the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Drivers to remove decommissioned infrastructure.	Appropriate driving license required.

3.6 Equipment Requirements

3.6.1 The equipment required for the key components of the Scheme have been included in **Table 2** below:

Table 2: Equipment Requirements

PV Array Sites	BESS	Substations
Inverters, transformers and switchgear to be incorporated in a conversion unit or to be standalone equipment.	Inverters, transformers and switchgear to be incorporated in a conversion unit or to be standalone equipment.	Transformers and switchgear
Electrical Cables (LV, MV)	Electrical Cables (LV, MV)	Electrical Cables (MV, HV)
Earthing	Earthing	Earthing
Civil Materials (e.g. concrete)	Civil Materials (e.g. concrete)	Civil Materials (e.g. concrete)
Modules and mounting structure	BESS	Relay Rooms
CCTV	CCTV	CCTV
Perimeter Fence	Perimeter and Palisade Fence	Perimeter and Palisade Fence
	HVAC or liquid cooling system	Fibre Chambers
	Ground tank for water storage or open water bodies	Welfare facilities and control building or container

4 Economic Policy, Legislation, and Industry Practice

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 A review has been undertaken of the relevant local and national planning policy and economic development strategies of the host authorities of the Scheme. Documents which are relevant to the Scheme's SSCEP are listed below, followed by the key relevant policies and industry commitments the Scheme would comply with.

4.2 National Policy

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

4.2.1 Section 5.13.4 of the NPS EN-1 (Ref 13) states that all relevant socio-economic impacts should be assessed, including the following which are relevant to this Outline SSCEP:

- The creation of jobs and training opportunities. Applicants may wish to provide information on the sustainability of the jobs created, including where they will help to develop the skills needed for the UK's transition to Net Zero.
- The provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure, including the provision of educational and visitor facilities.
- Any indirect beneficial impacts for the region hosting the infrastructure, in particular in relation to use of local support services and supply chains.

4.2.2 The NPS also encourages applicants at section 5.13.6 to "*where possible, demonstrate that local suppliers have been considered in any supply chain*".

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)

4.2.3 Section 2.10 of the NPS EN-3 (Ref 14) provides specific policy to the development of solar infrastructure, and sets out considerations of matters that should be assessed, including the following from paragraph 2.10.32, which due to the intention of the Applicant to support continued agricultural employment in relation to the landholdings affected by the Scheme where feasible, is relevant to this Outline SSCEP at:

“Where sited on agricultural land, consideration may be given as to whether the proposal allows for continued agricultural use and/or can be co-located with other functions (for example, onshore wind generation, storage, hydrogen electrolyzers) to maximise the efficiency of land use.”

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2025)

- 4.2.4 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF (Ref 15) states that, *“Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.”*

4.3 Local Policy and Strategy

Local Planning Policy

- 4.3.1 Relevant planning policy documents from the host authorities for the Scheme are discussed below. This review of local planning policy focusses solely on policies directly related to employment, local economy, workplace education and training, and developing industry-specific skillsets in each local authority area.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

- 4.3.2 Key to the strategic objectives of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2006 to 2026 (adopted January 2015) (Ref 16), is the *“delivery of a thriving economy”*. The plan seeks to achieve this objective through promoting new and safeguarding existing employment, *“facilitating the relocation, modernisation and expansion of existing businesses”*, and ensuring that *“appropriate employment opportunities are available for Wiltshire’s residents providing the opportunity for people to live and work locally”*.
- 4.3.3 The policies (Core Policies 34 to 40) set out to achieve this objective seek to target the creation of up to 10,000 jobs and the safeguarding of 8,000 more in existing employment hubs. This will be achieved by promoting allocation of strategic employment sites in locations best placed to stimulate economic growth, and through the regeneration of primary population centres to drive sustainable businesses. This also includes at Policy 39: Tourist Development specific policy for the management and promotion of a sustainable and flourishing tourism industry in Wiltshire.
- 4.3.4 These are supported by Core Policy 42: Standalone Renewable Energy Installations, which sets out the Council’s support in principle for

renewable energy infrastructure subject to meeting the spatial policy requirements. Furthermore, Core Policy 10: Spatial Strategy: Chippenham Community Area, Core Policy 11: Spatial Strategy: Corsham Community Area, Core Policy 13: Spatial Strategy: Malmesbury Community Area, and Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy: Melksham Community Area provide additional location-specific considerations for meeting localised employment needs and strengthening of each local-area based economy.

Saved Policies

- 4.3.5 Planning policy for Wiltshire also retains ‘saved policies’ from the previous Local Development Plans for the pre-2009 districts, prior to the formation of the unitary Wiltshire Council. Saved policies from the North Wiltshire and West Wiltshire are considered relevant as the Scheme falls within the former boundaries of these pre-2009 district areas.
- 4.3.6 Retained policies from the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011, adopted June 2006 (Ref 17) are limited to a total of five employment land allocations set out in saved policy BD1 Employment Land. All other business and employment specific policies have been superseded by the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- 4.3.7 The West Wiltshire District Plan, First Alteration, adopted June 2004 (Ref 18) contains a number of employment allocations that have been saved. These are:
- E1A New Employment Land Allocation: West Ashton Road, Trowbridge (12.1 ha);
 - E1B New Employment Land Allocation: south and west of Bowerhill industrial estate, Melksham (34.5 ha); and
 - E1D New Employment Land Allocation: Northacre/ Brook Lane Trading Estate, Westbury (13 ha).
- 4.3.8 Additionally, policy E10 Horse Related Development has been retained as an employment-based policy for the management of equestrian businesses, which is of some relevance to the Scheme as a result of the substantial number of equestrian businesses located in the areas immediately surrounding the Scheme’s Order Limits.

South Gloucestershire Core Strategy

- 4.3.9 The South Gloucestershire Core Strategy 2006 to 2027 (adopted December 2013) (Ref 19) provides strategic level planning policy and supports “*managing future development*” and “*maintaining economic prosperity*”. The plan seeks to achieve these aims through the sustainable development of community facilities and infrastructure, and through

supporting and enhancing economic growth, productivity, and innovation in the South Gloucestershire area.

- 4.3.10 Policies CS11 to CS14 provide for the safeguarding of existing economic development and seeking to enhance the vitality of town centres and retail as an economic function. Together these seek to ensure economic growth is maintained and new business and employment growth is supported and promoted in areas where it can be most sustainably expanded. These measures furthermore support the location-specific aspirations for growth and regeneration in South Gloucestershire's urban areas.

South Gloucestershire Policies, Sites and Places Plan

- 4.3.11 In support of the core strategy documents, the South Gloucestershire Policies, Sites and Places Plan (adopted November 2017) (Ref 20), provides detailed development management policies to help meet the strategic ambitions for delivering and "*maintaining economic prosperity*". The policies (PSP26 to PSP36) set out to achieve this by providing specific policies to assist the development of multiple industries in the South Gloucestershire area, including providing specific policy for tourism, agriculture and equine businesses. The policies also provide specific consideration for urban versus rural economic development to ensure "*sustainable new development which promotes a strong rural economy*" is supported.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 4.3.12 Neighbourhood plans were introduced under the Localism Act 2011 (Ref 21) to provide a tool for parish and town councils, and neighbourhood groups to set out planning policies within their designated areas. Once adopted, these plans become an adopted part of local planning policy and as such are material considerations in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.3.13 The Scheme is located within and abutting a number of parishes that are designated neighbourhood plan areas. Those areas that have adopted neighbourhood plans, or have plans at examination or referendum stage (as of 1 June 2025) are listed below:
- Chippenham;
 - Chippenham Without;
 - Corsham;
 - Great Somerford;
 - Hullavington;

- Melksham Without (as part of Melksham);
- St Paul Malmesbury Without (as part of Malmesbury);
- Seagry;
- Sherston;
- Stanton St. Quintin (designation only); and
- Tomarton with West Littleton (designation only).

4.3.14 Those policies and matters in each neighbourhood plan considered relevant to the SSCEP are listed below.

Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2038

4.3.15 The Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2038, adopted May 2024 (Ref 21), supports and encourages the protection of existing business whilst seeking to promote new business growth and relocation to within Chippenham, to reduce trends towards Chippenham becoming increasingly a commuter town to the likes of Bath, Trowbridge, and Swindon. Policy objectives seek to promote a 'circular economy' to retain local investment and labour, and identify small-scale business units to promote start-up and flexible business requirements.

Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036

4.3.16 Policies within the Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036, adopted October 2023 (Ref 23), that manage economic development are focussed on supporting sustainable work environments, given particular importance to supporting the rural economy, agriculture, and local business and services.

Corsham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2026

- 4.3.17 Objectives to promote business and the economy, and the development of lifelong learning and upskilling are present in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2026, adopted November 2019 (Ref 24). The policies therein seek to meet its economic objectives through supporting and promoting sustainable employment, with particular focus on town centre businesses and tourism in Corsham. Lifelong learning is supported through policy aimed at promoting the sustainable growth of facilities at Bath Spa University and other higher and further education establishments.

Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2026

- 4.3.18 Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2026, adopted November 2017 (Ref 25), has no specific policies or objectives that are directly relevant to economy or education.

Hullavington Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016 – 2026

- 4.3.19 Hullavington Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016 – 2026, adopted September 2019 (Ref 26), has no specific policies or objectives that are directly relevant to economy or education. However, as part of its vision statement, the plan seeks to support the village's "*thriving local school*".

Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2: 2020 – 2038

- 4.3.20 The vitality of the town centre in Melksham is a key objective driver for economic policy in the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 2020 – 2038. The second edition plan was adopted in August 2025 (Ref 27), having passed referendum on 31 July 2025 (Ref 28). Policy therein supports revitalisation of town-centre based businesses or those that are closely connected to the town centre, with emphasis given to retaining and reusing previously developed employment land rather than new out-of-town employment developments. The Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 also supports renewable energy developments where it can deliver community benefits and contribute to community needs.

Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.3.21 A key objective in the Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan: Volume I – Main Body, adopted February 2015 (Ref 29), is to support a "*diversified local economy that provides more employment*". This is facilitated by policies that seek to facilitate a prosperous retail provision in the town centre whilst promoting tourism and associate business. The plan policies also provide specific allocations for larger strategic employment land, including to promote live/work units for small-scale sustainable business. Finally, the policies in the Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan also seek to support high-quality local education provision.

Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036

- 4.3.22 Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036, adopted May 2021 (Ref 30), contains policy which seeks to promote local business growth on small infill development sites within the village.

Sherston Neighbourhood Plan 2006 to 2026

- 4.3.23 The objectives of the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan 2006 to 2026, adopted May 2019 (Ref 31), seek to facilitate opportunities for new and existing businesses and social enterprise that benefit the community. The policies therein therefore seek to protect the loss of business premises, and support *“the creation of new business premises in appropriate locations”*.

Emerging Local Policy

Wiltshire Local Plan

- 4.3.24 The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan (Ref 32) is a proposed strategic planning document to update the existing and replace the existing Wiltshire Core Strategy. This emerging document will ensure local planning policy is of continued consistency with national policy and will introduce further detailed development management policies as part of a review of the saved development management policies not replaced by the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- 4.3.25 The emerging plan was submitted for examination on 28 November 2024. Due to the progressed nature of the policies therein, the emerging policies are likely to be of material consideration to the Outline SSCEP and are likely to be of direct consideration to the final SSCEP following granting of the DCO. The policies therein deemed to be of most relevance to economic strategy and the Scheme are set out below:
- Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
 - Policy 4 Addressing climate change;
 - Policy 6-Policy 20 Chippenham Area Strategy policies;
 - Policy 64 Additional employment land;
 - Policy 65 Existing employment land;
 - Policy 69 Tourism and related development; and
 - Policy 86 Renewable energy.

- 4.3.26 Progress on, and any changes to, the policies during the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan's examination will be monitored as they are published.

South Gloucestershire Local Plan

- 4.3.27 The emerging South Gloucestershire Local Plan (Ref 33) is currently being prepared to replace the existing South Gloucestershire Core Strategy and Policy, Sites and Places Plan. The emerging plan was opened for Regulation 19 consultation in April 2025, with the intention for it to be submitted for examination in September 2025. Due to the progressed nature of the policies therein, the emerging policies are likely to be of material consideration to the Outline SSCEP and are likely to be of direct consideration to the final SSCEP following granting of the DCO. The policies therein deemed to be of most relevance to economic strategy and the Scheme are set out below:

- LPS1 - Strategy Principles;
- LPS2 - Locational Strategy for South Gloucestershire;
- LP12 - University of the West of England, Frenchay Campus;
- LPS7 - Safeguarded Employment Areas;
- LP19 - Non-Safeguarded Employment Sites;
- LP20 - Employment and Skills Development;
- LP23 - Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience;
- LP26 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Systems; and
- LPS14 - Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Related Development.

- 4.3.28 Progress on, and any changes to, the policies during the emerging South Gloucestershire Local Plan's examination will be monitored as they are published.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 4.3.29 Both the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (Ref 34) and Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan (Ref 35) are currently under review as of 1 August 2025, with consultation having already been held on pre-submission draft policies. With regard to socio-economics, employment, and tourism matters, no changes made to the policies are directly relevant to this Outline SSCEP. That notwithstanding, any future updates to policies will be monitored as they are published.

Local Economic Strategy

Wiltshire

- 4.3.30 Economic and industrial strategy in Wiltshire (and neighbouring Swindon) is provided by the Swindon and Wiltshire Business and Growth Unit, which as of 1 April 2024 has taken over the responsibilities of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP).

Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan

- 4.3.31 The Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan, adopted January 2016 (Ref 37) sets out a number of key objectives directly relating to improving economic performance in the plan area, these being improving the skills and talent pool, making transport infrastructure improvements, improving digital capability, place shaping, promoting business development. The following economic sectors are also targeted as priority sectors in the plan: advanced engineering and high value manufacturing; health and life sciences; financial and professional services; digital and information and communications technology; and land-based industries. Secondary targets are the visitor economy, adult health and social care, low carbon economy, and construction.

Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) 2020-2036

- 4.3.32 Longer-term economic and industry strategies in the Wiltshire and Swindon area is set out in the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy 2020 to 2036, published March 2020 (Ref 38). This document also provides part of the evidence base for the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan. The strategic priorities set out therein seek to develop research and development, higher education and skills, improved infrastructure, and place-specific industry growth including tourism along 'The Great West Way'.
- 4.3.33 The LIS has five foundational themes upon which its objectives and aspirations are built: ideas, people, infrastructure, business environment, and places. Through these, the LIS seeks to foster and improve innovation and skills growth particularly in sectors such as life sciences, high-value manufacturing and engineering, and prioritisation of research and innovations opportunities. By supporting its people and skill base by investing in education and infrastructure, the LIS aims to help encourage a burgeoning business environment, supported by physical development and growth in targeted locations, such as around the M4 and A350 corridors to maximise connectivity and trade opportunities.

SWLEP Local Skills Report

- 4.3.34 A key objective of the SWLEP's Local Skills Report 2022 (Ref 39) is to develop local skills supply and ensure inclusive growth in the expansion of labour market intelligence. Key targets to this are to improve *“take-up and achievement of apprenticeships by promoting this up-skilling or re-skilling route in a more targeted way”*, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes to labour markets that resulted from this. Furthermore, the plan specifically highlights the need to promote pathways into employment for young people and occupational groups.

Swindon and Wiltshire Local Skills Improvement Plan

- 4.3.35 The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Skills Improvement Plan Progress Report of June 2025 (Ref 40) identifies how the local strategy for skills improvement in Swindon and Wiltshire are progressing against their strategic aims. These aims include gathering intelligence about unmet skills needs for new entrants and within the workforce, understanding shortages, priorities, and changes to sectoral needs, and supporting provision for post-16 entrants into the labour market.

- 4.3.36 The LSIP identifies that key priorities to continue building on to meet the plan objectives. This includes improvements to the provisioning and resourcing of foundational skills building through colleges, independent training providers, employers and stakeholders to respond to systemic local needs.

Wiltshire Tourism Strategy

- 4.3.37 Tourism and visitor strategy in Wiltshire is provided by Visit Wiltshire. Strategic objectives for managing and investing in the development of the visitor economy in Wiltshire and Swindon was provided by the Destination Management and Development Plan 2015-2020 (Ref 41). The priority actions therein focus on increasing visitor numbers and spending through promotion and developing attractions, improving transport and accessibility, and providing accommodation and support to business reliant on visitor spending. This plan covers up to 2020 but has not been revised or replaced by a similar strategic plan. Following the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, and the direct impacts on the visitor economy as a result, Visit Wiltshire produced their Wiltshire Tourism Recovery Plan in March 2021 (Ref 42) to provide specific guidance for reinvigorating the recovery of the tourism and visitor economy following the pandemic.

- 4.3.38 Part of the Cotswolds National Landscape falls within Wiltshire, with the Scheme bordering the edge of the National Landscape at Alderton and Sherston. As such, understanding the strategic objectives for visitors and tourism in the Cotswolds is a necessary part of the assessment of socio-economic, tourism and recreation effects. The Cotswolds official tourism information group published the Cotswolds Tourism Destination

Management Plan 2022-2025 in 2022 (Ref 43) to set out its objectives for improving visitor numbers and spending across the National Landscape and its immediate surroundings. These objectives include: improving sustainability, improving partnership with businesses and public sector organisations, enhancing the visitor experience, developing the Cotswold brand and advertising, invest in greater intelligence to inform future objectives, and improve business performance in the National Landscape area.

South Gloucestershire (West of England)

West of England Local Industrial Strategy

- 4.3.39 Economic and industrial strategy for Bath and North East Somerset, and for South Gloucestershire, are published in the West of England Local Industrial Strategy July 2019 (Ref 44). This sets out the strategic priorities for the West of England area (which also includes Bristol and North Somerset), which are promotion of cross-sectoral innovation, developing inclusive growth, increasing productivity, maximising innovation in delivery of infrastructure, and committing to tackling climate change. Its key innovation sectors include advanced engineering and aerospace; creative, cultural, and digital industries; financial, business and legal ‘tech’ services; and low carbon technology.

West of England Employment and Skills Plan

- 4.3.40 The West of England Combined Authority’s Employment and Skills Plan 2023 (Ref 45) sets out strategic ambitions for improving skill sharing and innovation in business in the West of England area. This is based on five priority objectives for improvement set out in the plan: strengthen and simplify the employment and skills system; enable all young people to achieve their potential; support unemployed and inactive people into work; support people to progress in work; and, address employer needs and skills gaps. These are aimed to meet systemic skills mismatching in the area, inequalities between higher and lower paid workers, and low awareness and progression through higher level learning and apprenticeships.

West of England and North Somerset Local Skills Improvement Plan

- 4.3.41 The West of England and North Somerset Local Skills Improvement Plan Progress Report of June 2025 (Ref 46) identifies how the local strategy for skills improvement in the West of England authority area is progressing against its strategic aims.
- 4.3.42 The LSIP identifies that key priorities to improve include simplification of the skills system and improving awareness of the mechanisms available

to enable employers to understand and address needs. Retention of lecturers in further education centres is also a priority to ensure training opportunities are maintained, particularly for sectors such as advanced manufacturing, engineering, and construction and the built environment.

Neighbouring Authority Areas

Gloucestershire's Economic Strategy

- 4.3.43 The districts of Cotswold and Stroud fall under the economic strategy area of Gloucestershire County Council, with their strategic economic and industrial ambitions set out in their Gloucestershire's Economic Strategy 2024-2034 (Ref 47). This document sets out the proposed strategic aims for the Gloucestershire area. These include: delivering sustainable growth based around the support of a centralised Gloucestershire City Region; building key sectors such as agri-tech and cyber-tech as part of creating and attracting investment opportunities; supporting and improving employment and local skills; and driving innovation through supporting ideas, people and businesses.

Gloucestershire Skills Strategy

- 4.3.44 The Gloucestershire Skills Strategy 2022-27 (Ref 48) seeks to drive improvement and expansion of business skills through promoting and supporting education and training providers. The strategy identifies the need to develop a strengthened skills base in Gloucestershire to meet existing skill gaps and resultant employment vacancies. Advanced manufacturing and engineering, agriculture, food and rural business, banking and finance, construction and infrastructure, cyber-tech, energy and green renewables, health and social care, retail, and tourism and visitor economy are all prescribed key skill needs whilst highlighting the strengths and opportunities available in these sectors for upskilling and improved training.

Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan

- 4.3.45 The Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan Progress Report of June 2025 (Ref 46) identifies how the local strategy for skills improvement in Gloucestershire are progressing against their strategic aims.
- 4.3.46 The LSIP identifies that key priorities to continue building on to meet the plan objectives. Notable challenging in retaining training staff in advanced manufacturing and engineering courses, and overall across further education centres. Further, mental health and resilience support in highly skilled employment areas are to be improved to address critical and transferable skills gaps. Overall, the aims of the LSIP are to continue

engagement with stakeholders and employers to determine what skills are needed in the future, and where efforts to address these are best placed.

Emerging Local Strategy

- 4.3.47 In coordination between Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council, the Swindon and Wiltshire Business and Growth Unit have published their Emerging Economic Strategy for Swindon and Wiltshire 2025-2036 (Ref 50), which was approved in January 2025 to supersede the existing 2016 Economic Strategy.
- 4.3.48 The emerging strategy seeks to continue and strengthen work made towards its previous economic strategy by “creating the right conditions for economic growth” through focus on infrastructure and connectivity, place-shaping, skills and employment, business, and priority sectors. A key underpinning challenge is to help improve productivity within Wiltshire, which at the time of drafting, compares unfavourably to Swindon and national expectations.
- 4.3.49 The emerging strategy identified the need for energy and climate resilience, strengthening reskilling and upskilling opportunities, and delivering business support services to foster innovation.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Local planning policies of the host authorities, Wiltshire Council, support renewable energy developments such as the Scheme. In addition, the policies set out in their local plan promote greater access to training and learning opportunities so local people can gain access to higher skilled jobs.
- 4.4.2 The strategies from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and authority economic strategic approaches have been considered above, highlighting the priorities for development and investment in local skills and employment opportunities to improve long-term economic prosperity for the area. The SSCEP seeks to promote the Scheme’s importance in contributing to these aspirations.

5 Opportunities for Economic Improvement

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section outlines possible activities that the Applicant will engage in as part of the work programme of the SSCEP.

5.1.2 As stated in earlier chapters, the opportunities outlined here respond to the local context and reflect the likely implications of the Scheme. The final SSCEP will be developed substantially in the accordance with this Outline SSCEP and will be submitted for approval by Wiltshire Council as the discharging authority in consultation with South Gloucestershire Council as per a requirement in the **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]**.

5.2 Skills

5.2.1 For the Scheme to be successfully implemented, a variety of skills and disciplines are needed, as shown in **Table 1**. Education and training initiatives aimed at developing essential skills will benefit the local population while also increasing the supply of workers with the necessary qualifications to complete the project.

Apprenticeships

5.2.2 Apprenticeships are an invaluable tool to address skill shortages in an area or particular sector by upskilling and developing people's careers. This can help to meet labour and skill requirements for employers whilst providing training and paid employment for individuals. Therefore, by increasing people's skills and knowledge base this can also improve their pathways into employment and their future earning potential.

5.2.3 It has been identified that the Applicant will seek opportunities to work with existing further and higher education providers in and around the 20 km Study Area to offer apprenticeships and other academic support during the construction or operational phase of the Scheme.

5.2.4 In developing the SSCEP, the Applicant will consider a programme to promote apprenticeships during the various phases of the Scheme.

Workforce Training

5.2.5 The Applicant will also consider other partnerships to support the training of employees and workers on the Scheme.

5.2.6 Promotion of transferable skillsets shall be explored by the Applicant where practicable to aid workers displaced by the Scheme to transition to adjacent or similar careers, this may include helping agricultural workers transition to land management and site maintenance on the Scheme.

- 5.2.7 The intent would be to support the achievement of vocational qualifications (e.g. BTEC, City and Guilds, NVQ, HNC) at various levels which are relevant to the delivery of the Scheme. For example, attendance of relevant courses will be encouraged in order to fill any skill gaps required to deliver the Scheme, or to provide alternative career training to those directly or indirectly displaced by the Scheme (such as in the agriculture and tourism industry).
- 5.2.8 This would upskill individuals, enhance career prospects and employment opportunities. As a result, this should also increase their income and standard of living.

STEM Education and Career Advice

- 5.2.9 It has been identified that there is currently a growing take-up of STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) within schools and colleges nation-wide (Ref 51). This suggests there may be opportunity to foster and develop technical and professional skills required to deliver or support the Scheme into the future workforce, and other large infrastructure projects in the future.
- 5.2.10 The Applicant will look at practicable opportunities to support STEM education aimed at primary children, secondary school students, college students, and/or other young people in the 20 km Study Area. This will help to ensure there is an availability of skilled and qualified people to meet the demands of the future in delivering large infrastructure projects through the promotion of education leading to STEM-based careers.
- 5.2.11 The main objective will be to educate and motivate young people about STEM jobs more broadly. However, some of these target people could gain the technical and professional skills needed to eventually join the workforce of the Scheme, given its timetable.
- 5.2.12 Engagement with local schools, colleges and local authorities, would be the initial step in order to determine the demand and create the proper initiatives.
- 5.2.13 Site visits during the construction period and during the Scheme's operational lifetime may be a useful tool to educate and inspire students. As such, the Applicant will consider how best to provide a physical space or meeting point within the Scheme to deliver STEM initiatives to local groups and schools. People using this space could then gather and learn about the solar farm and renewable energy, making the Scheme an educational resource for the local area.

5.3 Employment

5.3.1 The expected employment benefits of the Scheme are shown in Section 3. This section will discuss opportunities to maximise these employment benefits for local people and disadvantaged groups.

Local Recruitment

5.3.2 The Applicant will contact local authorities, Job Centre Plus and other local initiatives operating within the 20 km Study Area to establish available local networks of potential employees for the Scheme.

5.3.3 The Applicant will also seek to utilise local recruitment companies operating within the 20 km Study Area that can target employment opportunities for the Scheme by placing advertisements in local papers and shops or services.

5.3.4 The Applicant will furthermore seek to explore available opportunities to support agricultural workers in moving to diversified agricultural practices (such as sheep rearing and grazing) that can be continued alongside the operation of the Scheme.

5.3.5 Once construction commences it may be helpful to display or advertise for vacancies in suitable physical locations or media within the 20 km Study Area. Alternatively, a named Skills and Employment Manager for the Scheme would be made responsible for filling vacancies by reaching out to local contacts.

Workforce Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

5.3.6 The Applicant will introduce initiatives to maximise equality and inclusion in its hiring and working practices to ensure a beneficial level of diversity within the workforce. The following groups which would be the target of this measure include:

- Workers of a certain gender, ethnicity or age (e.g. women in construction and engineering, under-represented ethnic groups, 16 to 24 year olds or older workers); and
- Disadvantaged or under-represented groups, for example, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders or disabled people.

5.3.7 Through consultation post-consent, particular target groups would be identified using specialist local job brokerage agencies.

5.3.8 Regular reporting on the demographic profile of the workforce and the experiential quality of the workplace for workers could be recorded and documented using a voluntary survey to collect data based on the age,

ethnicity, gender and disability of the workforce, to ensure hiring and working practices are equitable and inclusive.

5.4 Supply Chain

- 5.4.1 The Applicant will take measures to maximise benefits to local businesses from spending on goods and services during each phase of the Scheme.

Networking

- 5.4.2 The Applicant will identify and collaborate with local partners including the local authorities in the 20 km Study Area to inform small businesses about contract and purchasing opportunities resulting from the Scheme. It is the intention of the Applicant to communicate with members and individuals interested in the energy sector in the region.
- 5.4.3 In order to boost the local presence within the Scheme and make use of the local supply chains the Applicant will reach out to potential suppliers and organise 'meet the buyer' events.

Procurement

- 5.4.4 The approach to procurement for the Scheme will take into account the objective of maximising benefits to local firms, while balancing this goal to ensure the Scheme is delivered in a competitive manner.
- 5.4.5 The Applicant will seek to engage with potential contractors early in the process. Contracting opportunities will be publicised in order to maximise local reach, including (but not limited to) using social media, local newspapers and in respected industry publications.
- 5.4.6 The Applicant also aims to work with local partners, to help identify and engage with local business that want to become part of the supply chain.

International Supplies

- 5.4.7 Any procurement of supplies internationally will comply with both national and international law, and all policy and safety measures will be adhered to in the transportation of supplies. Risk assessments will be produced when required and will be strictly followed by all in that particular supply chain.
- 5.4.8 All international suppliers will be held to a minimum quality with regard to environmental, professional and ethical working practices (including but not limited to the banning of suppliers or manufacturers that engage in slavery or forced labour) as agreed by the members of Solar Energy UK.

6 Plan Delivery

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 This section describes how the SSCEP is to be delivered, including potential roles, responsibilities and timelines.

6.2 Organisational Framework

6.2.1 The potential organisational framework for developing and delivering the SSCEP work programme post DCO consent will include the following:

- The SSCE Lead Project Manager, who would drive the programme of works and be overseen by the project committee, likely to comprise staff members of the Applicant, operator (if a different company), and members of the appointed EPC contractor to build out the Scheme;
- The work programme would then be broken down into a number of target areas of economic improvement which will align with the opportunities described in Section 5. Each economic strategy for improvement, such as providing more apprenticeships, or increasing awareness and uptake of STEM subjects would have a named lead and internal or external partner. They would help support its delivery and share specific local knowledge and experience that will be critical to its success. Additional resources such as professional support, capital funding or physical facilities may be relevant; and
- If each action is successful, the outputs and, ultimately, the outcomes specified in the SSCE strategy, will be achieved. The outputs and outcomes will be monitored, and reporting will be undertaken. Lessons learned will be used to inform future SSCE work programmes.

6.3 Engagement with External Stakeholders

6.3.1 It will be vital to work with external stakeholders in order for the SSCEP to succeed. The development of the SSCEP will therefore be undertaken in consultation with the host authorities' economics and regeneration, and skills and education teams; local strategic economic groups – namely Swindon and Wiltshire Business and Growth Unit, West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, and Gloucestershire County Council; and local employment stakeholders such as the Federation of Small Business, and the Chambers of Commerce. This is not exhaustive, and any other recommended stakeholders will be included in engagement at the appropriate point of agreeing the SSCE strategy.

6.3.2 It may be possible to consult with local residents and community groups on issues relating to the SSCEP, building on the community engagement that occurred during preparation of the DCO application.

6.4 Delivery Timelines

6.4.1 **Table 3** sets out a timeline for developing and delivering the SSCEP.

Table 3: Timescales for Developing and Delivering the SSCEP

Key Milestone	Actions
2025 – after DCO application submission	Continue engaging with local stakeholders.
2026/early 2027 – Likely date for decision, assuming consent is granted	<p>Develop the SSCEP into the final document substantially in accordance with the OSSCEP, confirming the objectives and activities to be followed.</p> <p>Seek approval of the final SSCEP from the Local Authorities, in accordance with Requirement 19 of the DCO.</p> <p>Send out invitations for contractors to tender for work (if relevant).</p> <p>Engage with local businesses and market opportunities to them.</p>
2027 – earliest start point for construction	<p>Continued engagement with local businesses to promote recruitment and to establish programmes with young people.</p> <p>Develop strategies with contractors to deliver and monitor SSCEP requirements in contracts.</p> <p>SSCEP activities and outputs to be delivered during construction and operation.</p> <p>Activities and outputs to be monitored and reported on consistently to determine their successful completion.</p> <p>Any amendments or additional programmes to be added to the SSCEP must be agreed with the relevant Local Authorities.</p>

7 Monitoring and Feedback

7.1 Monitoring

7.1.1 Effective monitoring, measurement, and reporting of the SSCEP's goals and actions is crucial to determine whether the strategy is succeeding in its objectives.

7.1.2 A monitoring and reporting plan will be developed as part of the full SSCEP and will be submitted to the Local Authorities for approval.

7.1.3 Monitoring the objectives and actions of the SSCEP will be achieved by following the methods below:

- Consider how best to practically collect data, prior to defining measurable targets;
- Developing Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely (SMART) performance indicators;
- Ensuring mechanisms that are used to monitor the performance of the objectives are relevant to the stated objectives in the final SSCEP; and
- Ensuring performance indicators are flexible to account for changing circumstances.

7.2 Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

7.2.1 **Table 4** below sets out some potential measurable outputs and outcomes of the Scheme's SSCEP.

7.2.2 Outputs are the tangible results of pursuing the specific opportunities of the Scheme.

7.2.3 Outcomes are the longer-term results of implementing the SSCEP.

7.2.4 Outcomes should be measured and recorded periodically throughout the Scheme's lifespan. This information could be collected internally or externally by asking questions in a survey style manner, which may include the following:

- What objectives or goals have been achieved?
- Have the specific outcomes been realised?
- What would have happened normally?
- Was it value for money?
- Should anything have been done differently?

- What lessons can be taken into other projects?

Table 4: Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

Opportunity Area	Opportunity	Potential Outputs	Potential Outcomes
Skills	Opportunity 1: Apprenticeships	Number of apprenticeships funded/ taken up.	Reduction in proportion of population with no qualifications. Increase in energy sector-based training. Increase in skilled young professionals (upskilling). Increase in personal incomes.
	Opportunity 2: Other Training	Number of relevant vocational qualifications achieved.	Reduction in proportion of population with no qualifications. Increase in sector-based training. Increase in skilled workforce (upskilling). Increase in proportion of population with higher qualifications.
	Opportunity 3: STEM Educations and Careers	Number of schools engaged. Number of events delivered. Number of pupils participating in events. Increased awareness of STEM careers.	Take up of STEM subjects in further education. Increase in proportion of population with higher qualifications. Increase in skilled young professionals (upskilling).
Employment	Opportunity 4: Local Recruitment	Proportion of workforce employed from the local area.	Increase in energy sector employment in the local area. Increased local economic benefits.
	Opportunity 5: Maximising Diversity of the Workforce	Proportion of workforce employed from target groups. Number of employees who are happy with working environment/culture.	Increase employment levels for target groups.
Supply Chain	Opportunity 6: Business Networking and Support	Number of supplier events delivered.	Increase in turnover of local businesses. Increase in personal incomes.

Opportunity Area	Opportunity	Potential Outputs	Potential Outcomes
			Increase in standards of living.
	Opportunity 7: Procurement Strategy	Number/value of contracts secured by local businesses.	Increase in turnover of local businesses. Increase in personal incomes. Increase in standards of living.

7.3 Safeguarding

7.3.1 As a member of Solar Energy UK, Island Green Power, which the Applicant (Lime Down Solar Farm Limited) is a subsidiary of, are a signatory of the UK Industry Supply Chain Statement, which states:

“We, members of the UK solar energy industry, condemn and oppose any abuse of human rights, including forced labour, anywhere in the global supply chain. We support applying the highest possible levels of transparency and sustainability throughout the value chain, and commit to the development of an industry-led traceability protocol to help to ensure our supply chain is free of human rights abuses.”

7.3.2 As a result, the Applicant is committed to ensuring the safeguarding against exploitation and forced labour in relation to direct and indirect employment associated with the development, including throughout its global supply chain.

7.4 Whistleblowing

7.4.1 The Applicant is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of service in all of its practices. To help achieve these standards it encourages freedom of speech.

7.4.2 As such, the Scheme will comply with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects workers making disclosures about certain matters of concern, when those disclosures are made in accordance with the Act’s provisions and in the public interest.

7.4.3 A full policy that sets out how the Applicant will support and encourage the Scheme’s employees to come forward and voice their concerns will be addressed in the final SSCEP that will be submitted to the discharging host Local Authority for approval.

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