

Green Hill Solar Farm

EN010170

Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan

Prepared by: Island Green Power / Lanpro

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Contents

<u>1</u>	<u>Introduction</u>	<u>4</u>
1.1	Purpose of the Report	4
1.2	The Scheme	4
1.3	Structure of this Document	5
<u>2</u>	<u>Economic Baseline</u>	<u>6</u>
2.1	Overview	6
2.2	Population	6
2.3	Workforce	7
<u>3</u>	<u>Economic Effects</u>	<u>9</u>
3.1	Introduction	9
3.2	Construction	9
3.3	Operation	10
3.4	Decommissioning	10
3.5	Job and Skill Requirements	11
3.6	Equipment Requirements	16
<u>4</u>	<u>Economic Policy, Legislation, and Industry Practice</u>	<u>17</u>
4.1	Introduction	17
4.2	National Policy	17
4.3	Local Policy and Strategy	18
4.4	Conclusion	24
<u>5</u>	<u>Opportunities for Economic Improvement</u>	<u>25</u>
5.1	Introduction	25
5.2	Skills	25
5.3	Employment	26
5.4	Supply Chain	27
<u>6</u>	<u>Plan Delivery</u>	<u>28</u>
6.1	Overview	28
6.2	Organisational Framework	28
6.3	Engagement with External Stakeholders	28
6.4	Delivery Timelines	29
<u>7</u>	<u>Monitoring and Feedback</u>	<u>30</u>
7.1	Monitoring	30
7.2	Measurable Outputs and Outcomes	30
7.3	Safeguarding	32
7.4	Whistleblowing	33
<u>References</u>		<u>34</u>



List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements:	11
Table 2: Equipment Requirements	16
Table 3: Timescales for Developing and Delivering the SSCEP	29
Table 4: Potential Measurable Outputs and Outcomes of the SSCEP	31

List of Figures

Figure 1: Qualification Attainment Rate in ages 16-64 as of December 2023	7
Figure 2: Employment Count 2014-2024 related to 2014 baseline	8



Issue Sheet

Report Prepared for: Green Hill Solar Farm

DCO Submission

Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1.1 This Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (OSSCEP) sets out how Green Hill Solar Farm Limited (the Applicant) will commit to promoting competition, innovation and skills within the communities surrounding Green Hill Solar Farm (the Scheme) and across the wider local authority areas of North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, Milton Keynes City Council, and Bedford Borough Council. The OSSCEP describes the potential workers, skills, equipment and services required to deliver the entirety of the Scheme and the measures required to engage with relevant stakeholders.
- 1.1.2 A Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP) will be prepared and submitted in accordance with the OSSCEP prior to the commencement of construction activities and is secured by a requirement in the Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme.
- 1.1.3 The 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 Chapter 17: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation **[EN010170/APP/GH6.2.17]** of the Environmental Statement (ES) 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 in Chapter 17 of the ES.
- 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 Zero. Finalisation and implementation of the SSCEP will thereafter be drafted substantially in accordance with the agreed OSSCEP and will be subject to approval from the host local authorities 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 and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts, which will generate and store renewable electricity for export to the National Grid. The Scheme is to be located at nine distinct Sites, known as Green Hill A, Green Hill A.2, Green Hill B, Green Hill C, Green Hill D, Green Hill E, Green Hill F, Green Hill G, and the Green Hill BESS. The Sites and associated substations and BESS are to be connected to the National Grid at Grendon Substation, via a new 400 kV substation constructed as part of the Scheme to provide the connections to the Sites.



- 1.2.2 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 substations and energy storage will be decommissioned and removed at the end of the lifetime of the Scheme, but the underground cables are anticipated to 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 DCO consent 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.



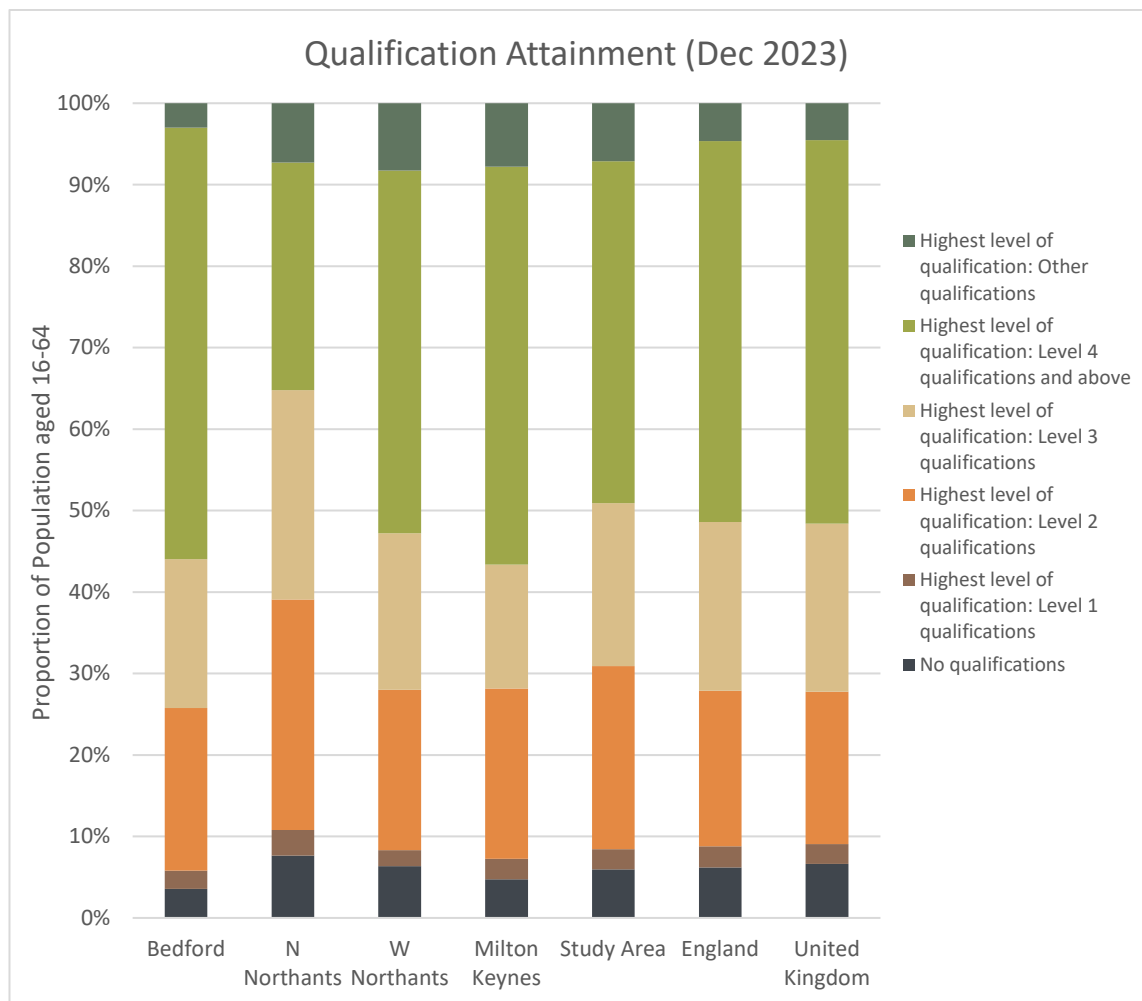
2 Economic Baseline

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 Chapter 17: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation **[EN010170/APP/GH6.2.17]**, which defines the “Study Area” for likely significant socio-economic effects as the combined authority areas of Bedford Borough Council, Milton Keynes City Council, North Northamptonshire Council, and West Northamptonshire Council

2.2 Population

- 2.2.1 The Study Area had a combined population of 1,257,500 in 2021 (Ref.1). As of 2021, the Study Area has an age profile that has a greater proportion of children, and working age people than the national population age profile (Ref.2).
- 2.2.2 The proportion of the population between the ages 16 to 64 years old achieving no qualifications varies from 3.6% to 7.7% in the Study Area, with the resultant rate of 6.0%, which is slightly lower than the national rates for England (6.2%) and the UK (6.6%) (Ref.3). Attainment of NVQ Level 4 and higher qualifications is also widely varied across the Study Area, ranging from 27.9% to 53.0% (Ref.3). Across the Study Area, the overall rate of Level 4 and higher qualifications stands at about 42.0%, compared to 46.7% in England, and 47.1% across the UK (Ref.3). This can be seen in more detail in **Figure 1** below.

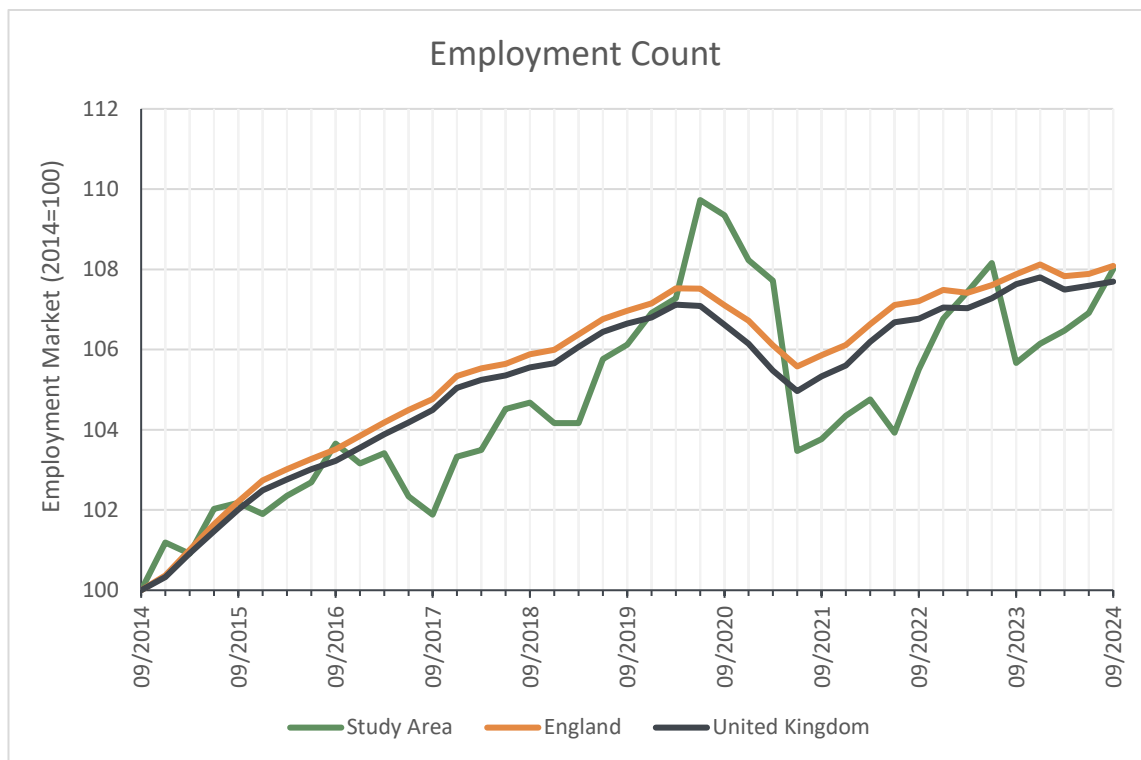
**Figure 1: Qualification Attainment Rate in ages 16-64 as of December 2023**

2.2.3 The population of the Study Area (Ref.4): is more likely than the national average in England to be deprived of access to suitable education and skills attainment. Barriers to accessing services are prevalent in many of the district areas contributing to their underperformance, with Milton Keynes performing poorest of the areas in the Study Area. The former council area of South Northamptonshire is a notable outlier in the Study Area as it performs better than the national average in all measured indices of deprivation. Whilst there are notable deprivation inequalities present within the Study Area, the Scheme's Order Limits (with the exception of a small area for highway safety and access) fall within Lower Super Output Areas that are in the 40% least deprived neighbourhoods in England (Ref.5).

2.3 Workforce

2.3.1 The economically active population is defined as the members of the working age individuals (16–64-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 national trends for England and the UK (Ref.6). This trend can be seen in **Figure 2** below.

**Figure 2: Employment Count 2014-2024 related to 2014 baseline**

2.3.3 For residents within the Study Area, the approximated median annual gross salary for full-time workers (in 2024) was £38,000 (Ref.7). For workers within the Study Area, the approximated median annual gross salary for full-time employment (in 2024) was marginally lower at £37,600 (Ref.8). There were also disparities within the Study Area, with those working and living in Milton Keynes earning significantly more than those in North Northamptonshire. The average salaries for those living and working in the Study Area are comparable to 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 Chapter 17: Socio-economics and Tourism and Recreation [EN010170/APP/GH6.2.17].

3.2 Construction

- 3.2.1 Due to the Scheme's nationally significant scale, it will create a considerable number of employment and economic uplifting 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 464 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees per annum, with the estimated onsite construction workforce expected to peak at approximately 876 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. It is estimated that a minimum of 28% of the gross labour requirement will be sourced from within the Study Area, based on 2023 Business Register and Employment Survey (Ref.9) results in the Study Area for workers directly in the "42.2: Construction of Utility Projects" industry, and assumptions made on likely requirements for inbound specialist skills.
- 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.10).
- 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 £30.8 million per annum. Approximately 33% of the GVA generated by the Scheme will be retained within the Study Area. This equates to a £10.1 million GVA per annum increase in the Study Area. This is based on the estimated GVA per worker for construction industry employees (Ref.9, Ref.10), based on 28% of the Scheme's construction labour being sourced from within the Study Area, with economic "leakage" of the remaining 72% 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.11).
- 3.2.8 Therefore, the Scheme is estimated to have a further GVA of £20.9 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 £5.78 million of this indirect and induced GVA uplift is anticipated to be retained within the Study Area.
- 3.2.9 The direct, indirect and induced economic benefits of the Scheme therefore are likely to total £51.7 million of GVA uplift per annum, £15.9 million of which will be retained within the 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 2022-baseline economy within the Study Area is estimated to be an uplift of £14.4 million GVA per annum.

3.3 Operation

- 3.3.1 The ongoing workforce associated with the operation of the Scheme throughout the Scheme's operation is likely to be limited to maintenance crews, landscaping teams, and occasional repair units.
- 3.3.2 The DCO also applies for the provision of a peak replacement scenario within which all onsite Solar PV and BESS infrastructure could be replaced in a two year period. During this period, an estimated gross 182 FTE employees per annum would be required, with the estimated onsite replacement workforce expected to peak at approximately 412 workers.

3.4 Decommissioning

- 3.4.1 The decommissioning of the Scheme is expected to take approximately two years at the end of the life of the Scheme.
- 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 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 Statement (ODS) [EN010170/APP/GH7.3] will be submitted as part of the DCO application, and a detailed decommissioning plan will be produced substantially in the form of the Outline Decommissioning



Statement and submitted to Local Authorities for approval closer to the date the Scheme stops operating.

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 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 Site and for access onto and away from the Site;• The digging of trenches for cabling; and• Preparation for and laying foundations for the solar stations, 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 Sites.	No specific qualifications required.
	Building Construction	Labour to build the temporary storage sheds.	Relevant construction qualifications required.



Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
		Labour to build substation control and relay buildings.	
	Racking Structure Assembler	Manage a ramming or screw-piling machine to create the solar structure and assemble the associated structure.	<p>Skilled workers required to control the ramming or screw-piling machines.</p> <p>Less skilled workers required to assemble other components of the structures.</p>
	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.
	Cable Construction using trenches	<p>Preparation of the Sites and cable corridor.</p> <p>Work includes:</p> <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	Preparation of the Sites and cable corridor.	Relevant qualifications and accreditations required to operate



Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	drilling (trenchless cabling technique)	<p>Work includes:</p> <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. 	horizontal directional drilling that includes NVQ Directional Drilling Level 1 and 2.
	Security Guards	Protecting the Site during the construction process.	Protect the security of the Site 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 Sites.	Appropriate driving license required.
Operations	Electrical Engineers	To monitor and trouble-shoot any problems.	Low Voltage (LV), Medium Voltage (MV), and High 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 Site.	Protect the security of the Site.



Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	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 Site and for access onto and away from the Site; • 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 Sites.	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



Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
			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.
	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 Site during the decommissioning process.	Protect the security of the Site 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.



Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	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 Sites. 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 planning policy, national frameworks and economic development strategies of the administrative bodies relevant to 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) (2024)

- 4.2.1 Section 5.13.4 of the NPS EN-1 (Ref.12) states that all relevant socio-economic impacts should be assessed, including the following which are relevant to this 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) (2024)

- 4.2.3 Section 2.10 of the NPS EN-3 (Ref.13) 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 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.14) 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 three 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.

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (adopted July 2016) (Ref.15)

- 4.3.2 Part of the plan's vision is to focus on growing investment in green infrastructure and high-quality jobs to meet the needs and aspirations of local people. The plan also aspires for the area to be an 'exemplar for construction based innovation and the delivery of low carbon growth' as well as a 'showpiece for modern green living and well managed sustainable development'.
- 4.3.3 North Northamptonshire looks to strategically develop economic prosperity in the authority through achieving a sustainable balance between local jobs and workers and a more prosperous and diverse economy. This includes the target of 31,100 net additional jobs to the area in the period 2011 to 2031. The strategy identifies renewable and low carbon energy and green technologies as a sectoral strength within North Northamptonshire that the Scheme can take advantage of and contribute towards future sectoral growth. Delivering on these ambitions is set out in Policy 22 – Delivering Economic Prosperity.
- 4.3.4 Policies 10 – Provision of Infrastructure, and Policy 26 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy together show that there is specific policy support for renewable energy schemes, provided their delivery is consistent with place-making policy.

Wellingborough Local Plan (Part 2) (adopted February 2019)

- 4.3.5 Provides locally specific development policies to support economic growth policies in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, the Wellingborough Local Plan (Part 2) (Ref.16) further supports the development of a prosperous economy. The plan also reiterates support for the vision and outcomes of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy that details a vision for low carbon growth and the growth of high-quality jobs. Of most relevance to the Scheme is Policy E3 – Employment Outside Established Employment Estates.

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Part 1) (adopted December 2014)

- 4.3.6 Strategic economic policy for West Northamptonshire is set out in their Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (Ref.17). A central theme of the strategic vision is to secure economic stability and prosperity through ensuring a variety of job opportunities for local people. As well as ensuring that people have access to locally based educational facilities, to achieve high academic and vocational educational attainment to improve their employment prospects. A minimum net increase of 28,500 jobs is targeted in the period 2008 to 2029.
- 4.3.7 The policies deemed to be of most relevance to the SSCEP are:
- Policy S7 – Provision of Jobs;



- Policy S11 – Low Carbon and Renewable Energy;
- Policy E6 – Education, Skills and Training; and
- Policy R2 – Rural Economy.

Daventry Local Plan (Part 2) (adopted February 2020)

- 4.3.8 The Settlements and Countryside Local Plan (Part 2) (for Daventry District 2011-2029 (Ref.18) prioritises sustainable and diverse economic development. The plan shares the same vision as the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. Which includes enabling high academic and vocational educational attainment, with the aim that this will lead to more diverse employment opportunities. Objective 8 (Educational Attainment) aims to raise educational achievement and the skills base of the community, which is also echoed in Policy SP1 (Daventry District Spatial Strategy). The Plan furthermore provided local-level policy to support strategic economic policies in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) (adopted July 2020)

- 4.3.9 South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) (2011-2029) (Ref.19), supports increasing economic competitiveness and outcomes that address out-commuting and low job density in the policy area. Objective 1 recommends aligning training with employers' requirements to help more people into work to reduce levels of unemployment and policy EMP1 (Supporting Skills) aims to support the retention of the skilled resident workforce.

Plan:MK (adopted March 2019)

- 4.3.10 The local plan for Milton Keynes City, titled Plan:MK 2016-2031 (Ref.20), sets out planning policy to control economic developments, whilst promoting economic diversity and supporting the rural economy. Strategic aims include developing working skills in the local population and enabling greater economic prosperity and opportunities to learn. Policy DS3 (Employment Development Strategy) encourages training and skills development at all levels, as well as promoting further and higher education to create lifelong learning and development of new skills at all levels.
- 4.3.11 The plan also encourages proposals of renewable energy projects including solar farms, in policies SC2 (Community Energy Networks and Large Scale Renewable Energy Schemes) and SC3 (Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Generation).

Neighbourhood Plans

- 4.3.12 The Scheme is located within and abutting a number of areas that are designated neighbourhood plan areas. Those areas that have adopted neighbourhood plans, or have plans at examination or referendum stage (as of 31st March 2025) are listed below:
- North Northamptonshire
 - Earls Barton; and
 - Ecton.



- West Northamptonshire
 - Moulton; and
 - Overstone.
- Milton Keynes
 - Lavendon.

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

Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031 (adopted January 2016)

4.3.14 The neighbourhood plan for Earls Barton (Ref.21) promotes employment growth and opportunities within the community that enable sustainable development.

Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016-2031 (adopted June 2021)

4.3.15 A key part of the plans (Ref.22) vision and objective is to provide opportunities for development that can add to the sustainability of the local community.

Moulton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2014-2029 (adopted December 2016)

4.3.16 The Moulton neighbourhood plan (Ref.23) seeks to facilitate a lively, diverse and distinct village identity, enable the social and recreational needs of the population, and provide necessary infrastructure improvements. This also includes support for people working or studying in the surrounding areas. Promoting job growth and supporting the local economy is a key plan objective.

Overstone Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2029 (adopted December 2021)

4.3.17 Encouraging local businesses and recognising their contribution to the area is a key issue for residents in Overstone (Ref.24), and as such the neighbourhood plan looks to encourage small employment (including tourism and agricultural diversification) opportunities in the parish for residents and encourage renewable energy and low carbon emissions. This is supported by Policy 2 (Adapting to Climate Change) to ensure these aspirations are championed.

Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan 2019 to 2031 (adopted March 2020)

4.3.18 The neighbourhood plan for Lavendon (Ref.25) sets out in its vision statement the importance of the village as a desirable place to live and work. The plan includes specific policy for the promotion of local employment that will support local business growth and encourage local employment opportunities.

Emerging Policy

4.3.19 The emerging North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (Ref.26) is a proposed strategic planning document to replace the existing North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. The emerging plan is proposed to also take on some non-strategic planning policies from the Part 2 development management plans that form part of the Local Development Plan for North Northamptonshire. The emerging plan is in early draft and is due for publication consultation in early 2026. Emerging



policies deemed to be most relevant to socio-economics, employment and renewable energy will be monitored as they are published.

- 4.3.20 Similarly, West Northamptonshire Council is currently preparing their New Local Plan for West Northamptonshire (Ref.27) which will once published replace the current adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) and the Part 2 Local Plans. The emerging plan is in early draft and is due for publication consultation in October 2025. Emerging policies deemed to be of most relevance to socio-economics, employment and renewable energy will be monitored as they are published.
- 4.3.21 Milton Keynes City Council have in Autumn 2024 consulted upon their emerging draft Milton Keynes City Plan 2050 (Ref.28), which will replace their existing Plan:MK document upon adoption. This document will provide strategic and development management policies for the Milton Keynes City area. Notably, the draft plan contains specific policy strategies for the location of solar PV installations. The accompanying draft policy maps demonstrate that Green Hill G is located within the draft “Solar Farm Area of Search” (Ref.29). An ambition of the draft plan is to create more opportunities for jobs and higher-quality jobs. In order to achieve this goal the plan has set an objective to enable better access to education, skills and training, which is supported in Policy GS3 (Strategy for Economic Prosperity).

Local Economic Strategy

South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) (2019)

- 4.3.22 The SEMLEP LIS (Ref.30) provides a strategic industrial and business context which has helped to form the evidence base for economic policy across the three host authority areas. The LIS ‘supports the aims of the national Industrial Strategy which is the government’s long-term plan to boost productivity by creating high-quality, well paid jobs throughout the United Kingdom, with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure’. A key ambition for the partnership is to ‘improve productivity and sustainability in tandem, fuelled by renewable energy’ alongside ambitions for promoting innovation and employment skill provision.
- 4.3.23 The plan identifies that ‘skills shortages remain the top constraint on business growth, resulting in hard to fill vacancies and skills gaps in the existing workforce’ and advises that this can be ‘mitigated by understanding what future skills will be required and ensuring the appropriate training opportunities are provided and promoted’.
- 4.3.24 The SEMLEP states that it will support skills provision in the area, ‘drive greater business engagement with educators and students through the Growing Talent campaign’ and focus on the development of STEM skills.

South East Midlands Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) (2021)

- 4.3.25 The plan (Ref.31) identifies specific opportunities in the region to grow and prosper over the longer term. That includes building ‘a talent pipeline in line with employer needs, through informing education providers to shape curriculum’ and relevant high impact careers provision, such as STEM, by promoting employer engagement and creating vocational education opportunities. The ERS also aims



to 'strengthen inclusivity and diversity in the workforce, through relevant role models and tailored support'. As well as 'support upskilling and reskilling, by raising awareness of provision and promoting apprenticeships'.

- 4.3.26 The plan also identified the need to grow the use of renewable energy technologies in the region to achieve the net-zero target.

South East Midlands Local Skills Report (2022)

- 4.3.27 A key objective of the Local Skills Report (Ref.32) is to develop skills and align provision, facilities and pathways to suit employer needs through engagement with employers and educators. It is the aim that this should in turn reduce discrepancies 'between the skills and attainment needed by employers and those held by individuals'. The plan also aims to 'inform, inspire and raise aspirations of the talent pipeline'.
- 4.3.28 Furthermore, the plan specifically highlights the need to promote pathways into employment for young people and occupational groups. As well as developing diversity and inclusivity in all sectors for any gender, ethnic group, special education needs, or disability.

The South East Midlands Local Skills Improvement Plan (2023)

- 4.3.29 The Local Skills Improvement Plan (Ref.33) identifies improving understanding and communication between employers and training providers, as well as tackling the digital skills and green skills gap as some of the main priorities for the region. It also prioritises equality, diversity and inclusion of underrepresented groups.
- 4.3.30 Employers with hard to fill vacancies stated the main causes were due to a: lack of required skills; lack of attitude, motivation or personality; lack of qualifications and work experience.
- 4.3.31 'The South East Midlands has 130 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) ranking in the top 20% most deprived, against the indices of multiple deprivation'. The report identifies that skill gaps are present in LSOA where individuals do not have access to the resources, or support needed to acquire advanced skills or training.
- 4.3.32 Through research and surveys, it has been identified that a growing demand for skills in the renewables sector and specifically solar technology, will be required in the next 5-10 years. Furthermore, it's identified that there is a shortage of skilled workers in the construction industry and trades such as electrical work. As such, the report identifies that there is a skills gap in this area hindering progress to achieve sustainability goals and for the UK to transition to a low-carbon economy.

South East Midlands Strategic Economic Plan (2017)

- 4.3.33 The plan (Ref.34) sets out strategic investments and future actions needed to grow the regional economy to its full potential. One of the growth strategy priorities of the plan aims to improve skills attainment for an evolving modern competitive economy. The plan highlights the need to address the skills gap that has been identified by local businesses, through delivering an employer-led approach to skills development, including education, training, technical qualifications and apprenticeships. In addition, the plan aims to support



‘vulnerable groups and potential work returnees to overcome employment barriers and by providing lifelong opportunities for up-skilling and re-skilling’.

North Northamptonshire Economic Prospectus (2020)

- 4.3.34 The North Northamptonshire Economic Prospectus (Ref.35) provides a long-term view of the economic potential of the area and aims to identify opportunities to maximise its growth potential and realise priorities. The plan identifies Renewable and Low Carbon Energy as a future opportunity that offers high growth potential for the region to achieve economic prosperity. It is also stated that ‘North Northamptonshire has major potential in terms of renewable energy provision’. To ensure growth potential for the region it is identified that skill levels need to be raised to adapt to a changing economy. Such as, providing work-based learning opportunities to specifically address the skills shortages of 16 to 25 year olds.
- 4.3.35 Construction is also identified as a growth potential for the region and some programmes have already been established to meet the gap in the construction skills required. Such programmes offer onsite training to people across Northamptonshire with the aim to include all essential onsite work experience to make the participants job ready.

Milton Keynes Economic Development Strategy (2017-2027) (2017)

- 4.3.36 The Milton Keynes Economic Development Strategy (Ref.36) provides focussed strategic guidance for the development of a burgeoning economy in Milton Keynes, and forms part of the evidence base for the policies set out in Plan:MK. The strategy looks to develop and strengthen existing economic advantages through prioritising prosperity, innovation, and culture.
- 4.3.37 The report identifies the need to improve education provision, performance and workforce skills to meet the requirements of existing and future businesses. It is stated that this could be achieved through enhancing business engagement and by providing appropriate high-quality education, training, retraining and apprenticeships.

Emerging Economic Strategy

North Northamptonshire’s Economic Growth Strategy 2025-2030

- 4.3.38 The version 4 draft strategy document, approved by North Northamptonshire Council on 13 March 2025 (Ref.37), defines a series of eight priorities for action to guide investment. One of which is regarding “*realising the opportunities arising from renewable energy, clean energy industries and digital technologies*”, which the strategy seeks to accomplish through “*linking energy capacity with industrial opportunities*” and “*supporting wider growth in clean industries and the green economy*”.
- 4.3.39 The growth strategy of the plan is broken down across 3 pillars: business, people, and place. Under the second pillar (people), the strategy focuses on ensuring North Northamptonshire’s workforce can be retained and supported through enhanced learning and progression in work. This includes for enhancing basic skills offers, increasing the range of flexible and modular learning opportunities, and improving investment and access in workplace development. This pillar links



with the council's ambition to “*become a national centre for clean industry*” as the plan aims to “*focus on increasing the supply of skills for net zero*”.

West Northamptonshire Council Economic Growth Strategy (2025-2030)

- 4.3.40 In the draft West Northamptonshire Economic Growth Strategy, approved by West Northamptonshire Council Cabinet on 4 March 2025 (Ref.38), ensuring skilled and empowered people, and strong and dynamic businesses are identified as two of the three core themes in the strategy. Furthermore, clean energy is recognised as one of six investment sectors to promote West Northamptonshire’s strength in developing “*innovative technologies*”. The strategy seeks to prioritise increasing the skilled workforce and preparing greater numbers of young people for meaningful careers, whilst growing investment sectors to support innovation and productivity.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Local planning policies in the three host authorities support renewable energy developments. In addition, the policies in their respective local plans 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 full SSCEP will be developed substantially in the accordance with the OSSCEP and will be submitted for approval by Milton Keynes City Council, North Northamptonshire Council, and West Northamptonshire Council as the three host authorities as per a requirement in the DCO.

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 Study Area to offer apprenticeships and other academic support during the construction or operational phase of the Scheme.

5.2.4 In developing the complete 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 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.

5.2.7 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

5.2.8 It has been identified that there is currently a growing take-up of STEM subjects within schools and colleges (Ref.39). This suggests there may be opportunity to foster and develop technical and professional skills required to deliver the



Scheme into the future workforce, and other large infrastructure projects in the future.

- 5.2.9 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 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.
- 5.2.10 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.
- 5.2.11 Engagement with local schools, colleges and local authorities, would be the initial step in order to determine the demand and create the proper initiatives.
- 5.2.12 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 to establish available local networks of potential employees for the Scheme.
- 5.3.3 The Applicant will also seek to utilise local recruitment companies that can target employment opportunities for the Scheme by placing advertisements in local papers and shops or services.
- 5.3.4 Once construction commences it may be helpful to display vacancies around the Sites. 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

- 5.3.5 The Applicant will introduce initiatives to maximise the diversity, equality and inclusion of 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, 16 to 24 year olds or older workers); and
 - disadvantaged or under-represented groups, for example, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders or disabled people.



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

5.3.7 Regular reporting on the demographic profile of the workforce could be recorded and documented using a voluntary survey to collect data 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 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 professional and ethical working practices 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 members of the Applicant 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.
- 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.

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 – 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 20 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 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: Potential Measurable Outputs and Outcomes of the SSCEP

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.



Opportunity Area	Opportunity	Potential Outputs	Potential Outcomes
			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. 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 Limited, to whom the Applicant (Green Hill Solar Farm Limited) is a 100% subsidiary, 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 project team 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 three host Local Authorities for approval.



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