Light Valley Solar

Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan

Document Reference EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.13

February 2026

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Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009**

Light Valley Solar

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 Light Valley Solar Limited (the Applicant) will commit to promoting competition, innovation and skills within the local and regional areas of Light Valley Solar (the Proposed Development) and across the wider local authority area of North Yorkshire Council. The oSSCEP describes the potential workers, skills, equipment and services required to deliver the entirety of the Proposed Development and the measures required to engage with relevant stakeholders.

1.1.2 This document will form the basis for a detailed Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP) which will be prepared and submitted prior to the commencement of construction activities and will be secured through a requirement included in the Development Consent Order (DCO) Application for the Proposed Development[1].

1.1.3 The SSCEP will identify the opportunities and commitments 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 Proposed Development.

1.1.4 Chapter 13: Socioeconomics (Environmental Statement (ES) Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13**] assesses the potential significant impacts of the Proposed Development on the population and socioeconomic environment during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. 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 13: Socioeconomics (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13**].

1.2 The Proposed Development

1.2.1 The Proposed Development comprises a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station of over 100 megawatts (MW) and associated development comprising Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), substations, grid connection infrastructure and other infrastructure integral to the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases.

1.2.2 The total area within the Order Limits is approximately 1,270 ha. The Order Limits is made up of four broad areas:

[1] As mentioned in Chapter 13: Socioeconomics (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13.00**], references to 'a' or 'the' detailed SSCEP in this Outline plan can read as referring to 'any' detailed SSCEP, as more than one SSCEP could be brought forward for different parts of the Proposed Development, depending on the detailed construction strategy undertaken.

1) Solar Development Sites (total area of 900 hectares (ha);
2) Cable Route Corridor (total area of 328.5 ha);
3) Highways Improvements Areas (HIA) (total area of 17.1 ha); and
4) Site 8 Access (total area of 24.1 ha).

1.2.3 The main element of the Proposed Development comprises seven Solar Development Sites (Solar Development Sites 1-4 and 6-8) that will accommodate the Solar PV Panels. A BESS Compound will be located within Solar Development Site 2.

1.2.4 The Cable Route Corridor is the area within which the export connection cables (hereafter referred to as the 'Grid Connection Cables') would be located to connect the Solar PV Sites to the National Grid at the existing Monk Fryston Substation (hereafter referred to as the 'Existing National Grid Monk Fryston Substation') and the area within which cables connecting the Solar Development Sites would be located (hereafter referred to as 'Interconnecting Cables') (refer to Figure 2.1: Illustrative Site Layout Plan (ES Volume 2) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.01**].

1.2.5 Further details of the Proposed Development are presented in Chapter 2: The Proposed Development (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.02**] and the design envelope for the Proposed Development is set out in the Design Parameters and Commitments Document [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/05.06**] and the limits of deviation shown on the Works Plans [E**N0110012/APP/LVS/02.03**].

1.3 Structure of this document

1.3.1 The document hereafter is set out as follows:

1) 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 improvements can be focused.
2) Section 1 details the scale and nature of likely significant economic effects associated with the Proposed Development, which this document aims to maximise beneficially. These effects will be demonstrated across the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.
3) Section 4 summarises the aims of local and national planning policy and regional strategies to promote economic development, in the context of the relevant legislative requirements and industry standards.
4) Section 5 identifies ways for the Proposed Development to maximise opportunities to promote economic benefits in relation to skills, supply chains, and employment.

5) Section 6 gives outline details on the proposed approach to delivery of the SSCE commitments following the DCO Application consent and presents a framework for engagement with key stakeholders and a timeframe for the plan's implementation.
6) 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 employment and 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.

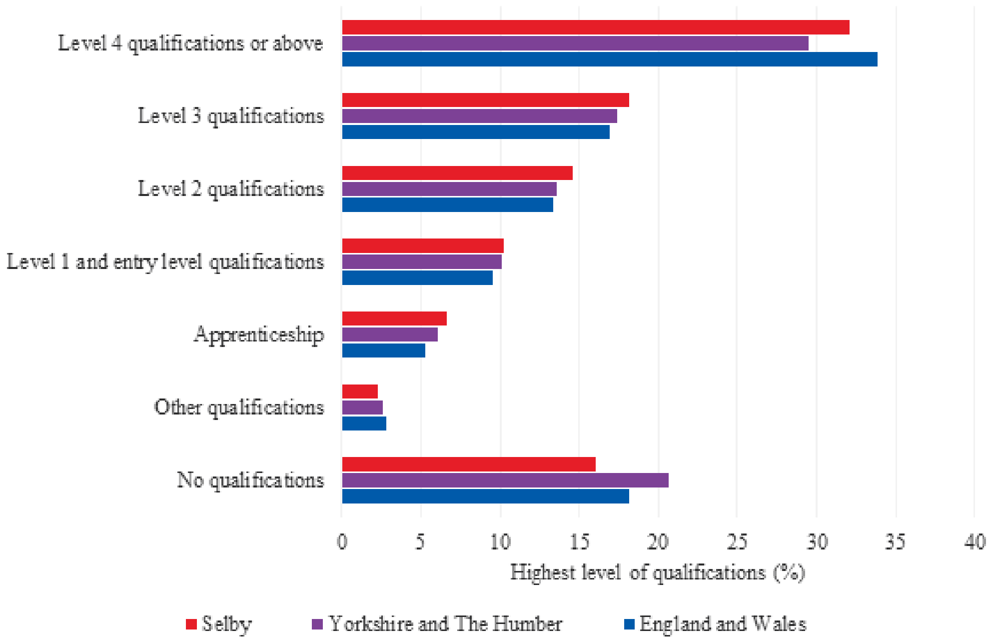
2.1.2 It should be read in conjunction with Chapter 13: Socioeconomics (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13**], which defines the 'Study Area' for socioeconomic effects as the North Yorkshire Council area, with a particular focus given to the former Selby District Council level, which if still active would have been the host authority for the Proposed Development. However, Selby along with 6 other councils were merged together to form the North Yorkshire Council in April 2023, as detailed in Chapter 13: Socioeconomics (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13**].

2.2 Population

2.2.1 Selby district area had a combined population of 91,988 in 2021 (Ref 1). As of 2021, Selby had an age profile that broadly follows the regional and national pattern for the three largest age groups being 50-64, 35-49 and 25-34 (Ref 1).

2.2.2 Those in Selby have a higher overall level of qualifications than both the region of Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales. The exception is that Selby has a lower number of people with Level 4 qualifications or above at 32.1%, compared to 33.8% for the national average; however, Selby is still higher than the regional average of 29.5% (Ref 2). Only 16% of the population in Selby have no qualifications, whereas this is 20.6% regionally and 18.2% nationally (Ref 2). This can be seen in more detail in Plate 2-1 below.

Plate 2-1 Highest Qualification level, Census 2021



2.2.3 Selby performed well and recorded an average of 7 when measuring particular domains of deprivation from the Index of Deprivation, whereby scores range from 1-10, with 1 being the most deprived and 10 being the least deprived (Ref 3). 12 out of the 54 Low Super Output Areas (LSOAs) scored 9 and 10, and only 1 of the LSOAs recorded a score of 1 (Ref 3). The most deprived LSOA is around 2 km away from the Cable Route Corridor area and over 6 km away from the closest solar panel area. Based on this data, this suggests that effects from the Proposed Development would be in less deprived areas and not the most deprived area.

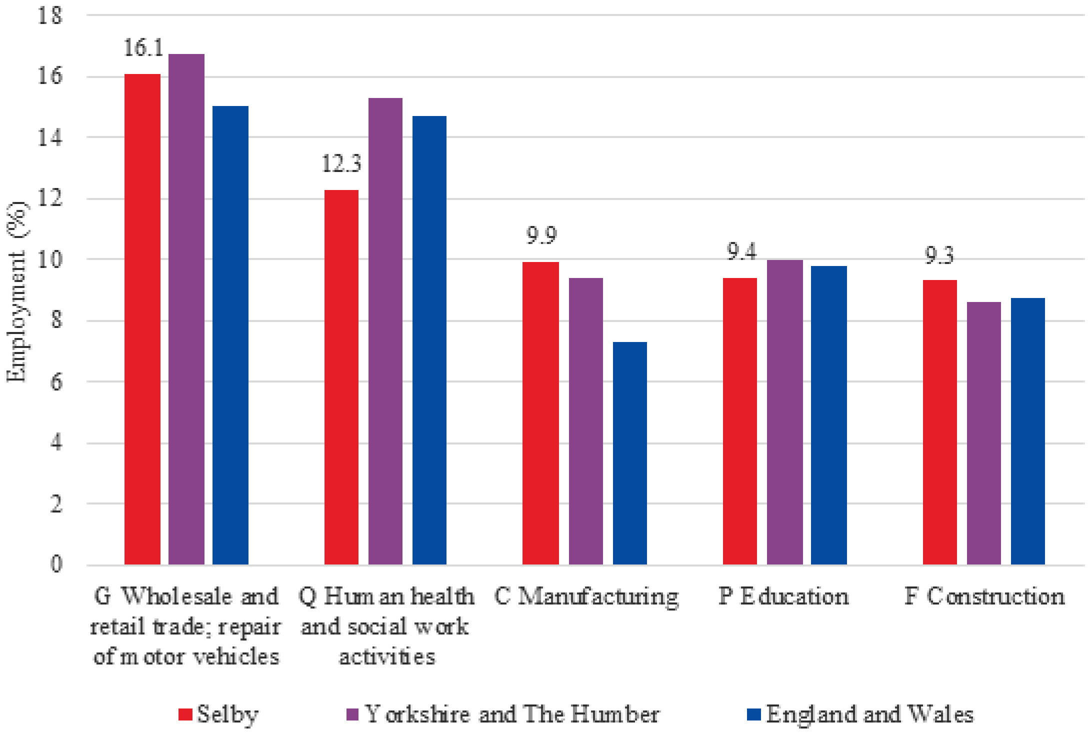
2.3 Workforce

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 Selby who are in employment is higher at 59.9% compared to 53.5% regionally, and 55.5% nationally (Ref 4). Only 2.2% of Selby's population were unemployed compared to 3.4% both regionally and nationally (Ref 4).

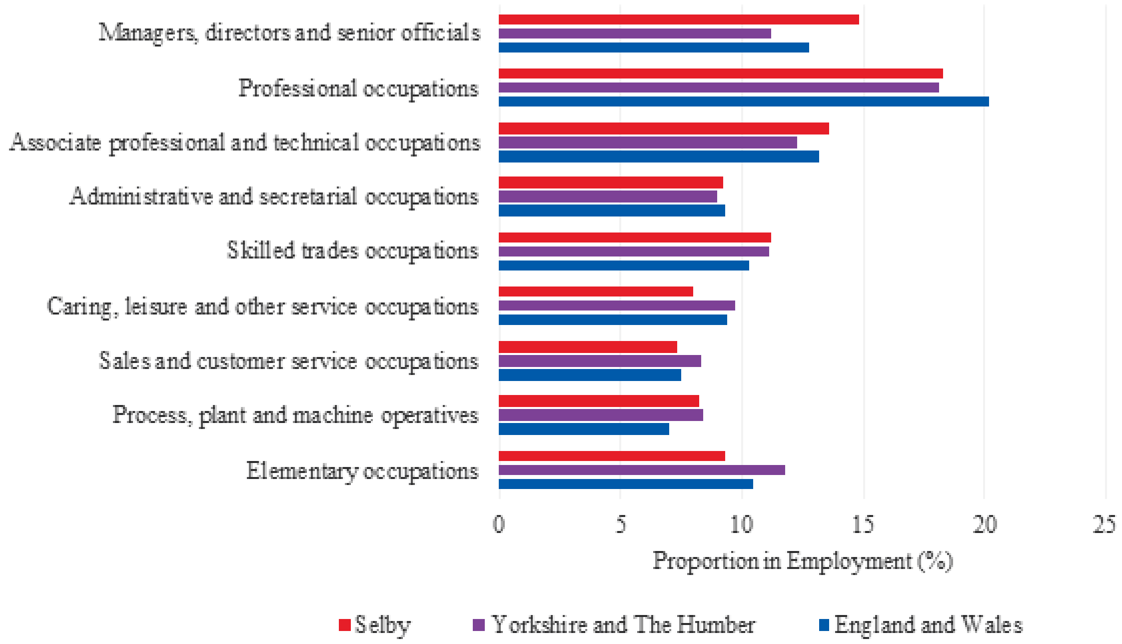
2.3.3 In terms of employment sectors, Selby has a higher than national and regional average in manufacturing and construction as seen in Plate 2-2.

Plate 2-2 Employment Sectors, Census 2021



2.3.4 Within Selby and the region, there is a higher concentration of skilled trades occupations and those employed in Process, plant and machine operatives, compared to the national figures, as shown in Plate 2-2 (Ref 5). This reflects the concentrations of workers in manufacturing and construction, as seen in Plate 2-3. Hence, this shows that if there are job opportunities during construction, Selby and the wider region have a strength in these relevant sectors and skills to be able to support the Proposed Development.

Plate 2-3 Occupational Employment, Census 2021



2.3.5 The median gross annual earnings of resident-based and workplace-based earnings for Selby are both higher than the region and national earnings (Ref 6). In Selby, resident-based earnings (£33,000) are higher than workplace-based earnings (£31,400), which suggests that jobs within Selby pay less than jobs that the residents of Selby commute to outside of the district (Ref 6).

2.3.6 Table 2-1 shows the median gross annual earnings of residents in Selby, Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales, broken down into resident-based earnings and workplace-based earnings from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

Table 2-1 Workplace and Resident Earnings (Ref 6)

Area	Workplace-based gross annual earnings	Resident-based gross annual earnings
Selby	£31,400	£33,000
Yorkshire and The Humber	£28,700	£29,000
England and Wales	£31,300	£31,300

3 Economic effects

3.1 Introduction

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

3.1.2 This section should be read in conjunction with Chapter 13: Socioeconomics (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LV06.01.13**].

3.2 Construction

3.2.1 Due to the Proposed Development's nationally significant scale, it will create a 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 socioeconomic factors such as wages, unemployment, and deprivation as a result of increased access to employment.

3.2.2 The construction of the Proposed Development is proposed to be phased over a 36-month period.

3.2.3 The estimated labour requirement for the Proposed Development over the projected construction period is equivalent to a gross 385 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees per annum, with a daily peak of 770 workers for limited peak periods for the Solar Development Sites. For the CRC, average workers has been estimated at 60, with a daily peak of 120 for limited peak periods. Finally, for the movement of staff delivering equipment to site, the average has been estimated at 17, with a daily peak of 35 for limited peak periods. This leads to a total average of 462 gross direct construction workers over the 36-month period. Based on the gross construction worker requirements for construction of the Proposed Development and taking into account additionality factors such as leakage and displacement, the Proposed Development is expected to generate, 520 net construction jobs, of which 260 would be from within the Study Area.

3.2.4 As the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development will also help to upskill local labourers and to offer working opportunities for disadvantaged individuals. It is estimated that 50% of the jobs per year will be sourced from within the Study Area (Ref 7), based on HM Treasury guidance (Ref 9) and data from other renewable energy projects of a similar scale.

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 8).

3.2.6 To compare across regions, GVA per worker is used to understand the direct output employment in local areas. In 2021, Selby's GVA was £21,268, which is 3.8% higher than the Yorkshire and the Humber region GVA of £20,494.

3.2.7 This indicates that, on average, the economic activity of workers located in Selby adds a relatively high level of value compared to some parts of the region. Therefore, disruption caused by the Proposed Development is less likely to significantly impact the overall GVA in Yorkshire and the Humber than if it were to be constructed within the region but outside Selby.

3.2.8 In addition to the direct construction employment generated by the Proposed Development itself, there would be an increase in local employment arising from both indirect and induced effects of the construction activity. Employment growth is anticipated to arise locally through suppliers to the construction process as a result of additional spending within local supply chains.

3.2.9 Additionally, part of the income of the construction workers and suppliers would be spent on goods and services in the Study Area, generating further employment.

3.2.10 Construction employment is assessed with a composite multiplier of 1.5 using reckoner figures from the Homes and Communities Agency Additionality Guide (Ref 9). Applying the composite multiplier of 1.5 to net direct employment generates an additional 173 indirect and induced jobs in the Study Area arising from the Proposed Development during the construction period.

3.3 Operation

3.3.1 The ongoing workforce associated with the operation of the Proposed Development throughout the Proposed Development's operation is likely to be limited to maintenance crews, landscaping teams, and occasional repair units.

3.3.2 During the anticipated 60-year operational life of the Proposed Development, it is expected that there will be requirement for periodic replacement of some of the electrical infrastructure. It is not expected that an extensive replacement of all components will be required across the entirety of the Proposed Development during one period; instead, the programme for replacement of equipment across the Proposed Development is anticipated to be staged to maintain the electrical export to the National Grid. It is assumed that replacement activities would require an estimated 188 FTE employees per annum would be required, with the estimated onsite replacement workforce expected to peak at approximately 541 workers.

3.4 Decommissioning

3.4.1 The decommissioning of the Proposed Development is expected to take up to 24 months at the end of the life of the Proposed Development.

3.4.2 For the purposes of this assessment, the estimated number of workers required to undertake the decommissioning of the Proposed Development will be 75% of the workforce required for construction. Therefore, the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development 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 Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.04**] will be submitted as part of the DCO Application, and a detailed Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) will be produced substantially in the form of the oDEMP and submitted to Local Authorities for approval closer to the date the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development have been detailed in Table 3-1 below:

Table 3-1 Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
Construction	Civil Engineering Workers	Preparation of the Solar Development Sites, including construction of Bird Mitigation Area. Work includes: ▪ 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 onsite substations, conversion units, and BESS.	Use of machinery, such as dump trucks, diggers and compactors. Use of cranes to lift the components into position.

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	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. Labour to build substation control and relay buildings, and switch rooms.	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 Conversion Units, to onsite switch rooms, substations and transformers and to the network grid. Connecting the BESS to transformers, a switchgear and the network grid.	Skills for cabling and installation of equipment required. Relevant qualifications for Low Voltage (LV), Medium Voltage (MV) and High Voltage (HV) wiring.
	Cable Construction using trenches	Preparation of the Solar Development Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Work includes: ▪ 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	Skill of using an excavator to remove layers of topsoil to produce trenches.

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
		▪ Cable installation will follow behind excavation.	
	Cable Construction using horizontal directional drilling (trenchless cabling technique)	Preparation of the Solar Development Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Work includes: ▪ 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 horizonal directional drilling that includes National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Directional Drilling Level 1 and 2.
	Security Guards	Protecting the Site during the construction process.	Protect the security of the Site during construction.
	Closed Circuit Television (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.	LV, MV, 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.
	Landscape Monitoring and Managers	To monitor and maintain the landscape / ecology areas	Knowledge and skills in ecology and landscaping.

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
		within the Proposed Development.	
Decommissioning	Civil Engineering Workers	Work includes: ▪ 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 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, conversion units, onsite substations and transformers.	Skills for cabling and removal of equipment required.
	Cable removal using trenches (if needed)	Work includes:	Skill of using an excavator to remove layers of topsoil to

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
		▪ 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.	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.
	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

The equipment required from the supply chain for the key components of the Proposed Development have been included in Table 3-2 below. Further to Table 3-2, the Proposed Development will also include cabling for the Cable Route Corridors.

Table 3-2 Equipment Requirements

PV Array Sites	BESS	Substations
Conversion units, transformers and switchgear to be incorporated in integrated conversion units or to be standalone equipment and switch rooms.	Conversion units, 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)
CCTV	CCTV	CCTV
Perimeter Fence	Perimeter and Palisade Fence	Perimeter and Palisade Fence
PV Modules and mounting structure	Battery storage enclosures including battery modules	Fibre Chambers
Direct current (DC) Combiner boxes	Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) or liquid cooling system	Welfare facilities and control building or container
	Ground tank for water storage or open water bodies	

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 Proposed Development. Documents which are relevant to the Proposed Development's SSCEP are listed below, followed by the key relevant policies and industry commitments the Proposed Development would comply with.

4.2 National policy

Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1)

4.2.1 In Section 2.3 the statement broadly details the growth opportunities of creating high-quality jobs while meeting net zero in the energy transition.

4.2.2 Section 5.13.4 of the NPS EN-1 (Ref 10) states that all relevant socioeconomic impacts should be assessed, including the following which are relevant to this SSCEP:

1) 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.
2) The provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure, including the provision of educational and visitor facilities.
3) Any indirect beneficial impacts for the region hosting the infrastructure, in particular in relation to use of local support services and supply chains.

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

NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)

4.2.4 Section 2.10 of the NPS EN-3 (Ref 11) provides specific policy to the development of solar infrastructure, and sets out considerations of matters that should be assessed, including the following from paragraph 2.10.24, which due to the intention of the Applicant to support continued agricultural employment in relation to the landholdings affected by the Proposed Development 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 electrolysers) to maximise the efficiency of land use."

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.2.5 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF (Ref 12) 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 authority for the Proposed Development 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.

Selby District Core Strategy Local Plan (adopted October 2013) (Ref 13)

4.3.2 Part of the plan's vision is to create a diverse economy, with a wide range of job opportunities that in turn forms sustainable communities. This aligns with a number of the plan's objectives that includes developing the economy by capitalising on local strengths; promoting diversification into new growth sectors; and making best use of natural resources by promoting renewable energy operations.

4.3.3 The Core Strategy identifies that an improved range of local employment opportunities, services and facilities will help reduce the number of work-related trips outside the area, and help to grow a modern, diversified and sustainable economy. The plan also acknowledges that a shift to the low carbon economy will bring enormous business opportunities, which should benefit the high employment figures in manufacturing and energy sector jobs. The plan also identifies that there is an opportunity to promote further growth of the low carbon sector and build on the success of recent developments.

4.3.4 The Council encourages the provision of new sources of renewable energy generation and supports growth sector jobs, as detailed in policies SP17 and SP13.

Selby District Local Plan (adopted February 2005) (Ref 14)

4.3.5 Some policies from the plan have been saved and are still relevant, however, these policies are not relevant to the areas of discussion for this report. In general, the plan does support economic development, and superseded policies did support the development of renewable energy projects, including solar.

Escrick Neighbourhood Development Plan (adopted December 2022) (Ref 15)

4.3.6 The aim of the neighbourhood plan for Escrick is to ensure that development is sustainable and meets the needs of current and future generations. The plan supports appropriate scale growth, green infrastructure and farm diversification.

Local economic strategy

North Yorkshire Council Economic Growth Strategy 2024-2029 (Ref 16)

4.3.7 North Yorkshire Council sees the Economic Growth Strategy as an opportunity to take the lead on tackling some of the biggest economic challenges. Including net zero and energy security, to utilise their strengths to combine accelerated economic growth, and maximise investment in North Yorkshire.

4.3.8 It is identified that a key strength of North Yorkshire includes its highly skilled workforce and strong labour market, with employment rates and qualification levels that exceed UK averages.

4.3.9 The plan lists three pillars that form part of the Economic Growth Strategy, with two being of relevance for this report. The second pillar is 'Infrastructure,' and energy infrastructure is a key part of the plan, due to its national significance and potential for both growth and decarbonisation.

4.3.10 The third pillar is 'People,' and the aim of this pillar is to ensure that people have the skills they need to develop their careers and participate in the economy. Another aim is to attract more young people to live and work in North Yorkshire, and to keep older talent in the workforce for longer, in order to meet the business demand for skills.

4.3.11 The proposed actions to achieve these aims include, promoting and brokering education and training between businesses and prospective workers, to build up the required skills for the growth sectors, such as renewable energy and construction. It is also identified that young and older people, the economically inactive, and people in low-paid jobs will need support to overcome barriers and skill shortages, to obtain high-quality and good jobs.

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority: Economic Framework (2024) (Ref 17)

4.3.12 The Economic Framework acknowledges the economic potential available to North Yorkshire, and the powerful contribution its land can make towards growth and the net zero targets. The three overarching ambitions underpinning the Framework include 'Transition to Carbon Negative', 'Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth' and 'Opportunities for All'.

4.3.13 All three ambitions include a focus on the potential of renewable energy to be expanded. Firstly, the framework details that renewable energy projects are central to achieving the ambition of North Yorkshire to be England's first carbon negative region. Secondly, to deliver inclusive economic growth, the framework explains that renewable energy projects will generate new investment and economic growth in the region, requiring more specialised skills that are of higher quality and provide greater wage opportunities.

4.3.14 Lastly, the framework covers how renewable energy projects will provide new opportunities in the region to grow the construction sector, which is a core sector of the economy, and provide higher-quality and higher-paid jobs. To ensure these opportunities are for all, the strategy proposes that providing education, skills and training in this industry would create a stronger and more resilient workforce; lower deprivation rates; support people with transferable skills into a growing sector; and support young people into in-demand job opportunities.

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority: Skills Strategy (2024) (Ref 18)

4.3.15 The Skills Strategy has four overarching ambitions, and three are relevant for the Proposed Development.

4.3.16 The first ambition is to provide an 'integrated, flexible and responsive skills system'. The ambition promotes collaboration between businesses and those seeking work opportunities in emerging key sectors, such as the renewable energy sector. This would help to support residents, from basic level skills to higher level and more transferable skills, thus, providing flexibility.

4.3.17 The second ambition aims to provide 'accessible careers support for all ages'. It is suggested that High Quality Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance is made accessible for all ages and career stages. In order to support new graduates, and those looking to progress or change career direction, and underrepresented groups, to further learning and employment prospects.

4.3.18 The third ambition is 'empowered communities,' that ultimately aims to unlock the potential and expertise of local people, to reduce inequalities, create opportunities and retain more wealth, for the benefit of local people.

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority: Adult Skills Fund 2025-2028 (Ref 19)

4.3.19 The Adult Skills Fund (ASF) outlines 6 strategic priorities including:

1) Widen Access and Participation: Act as a gateway to learning and progression through raising awareness, to ensure all potential talent and underutilised talent can be unlocked across the working age population.
2) Embed Basic and Transferable Skills: Provide foundations in higher skills to increase employment opportunities in the local labour market.

3) Unlock Progression Pathways and Underutilised Talent: Offer routes, programmes and qualifications to higher skills and better paid in-demand local jobs.
4) Develop Flexible Provision: Meet the needs of a range of learners across locations.
5) Build Capacity and Capability: Enable an integrated, flexible and responsive provider base.
6) Enable Effective Collaboration: Provide partnership and collaboration between providers, employers and communities, as well as across the skills system as a whole.

Creating a Competitive, Carbon Neutral Circular Economy in York and North Yorkshire 2019-2030 (Ref 20)

4.3.20 The report states that the goal of a circular economy is to move away from the previous ‘take-make-dispose’ economic model to an economy that designs out waste from supply chains and creates restorative and regenerative systems which keeps sustainable materials circulating within the economy for longer. The potential outcomes include increased asset value, improved economic growth, enhanced natural environments, boosts to skills and well-being and more resilient communities.

4.3.21 Achieving a carbon-neutral circular economy is underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources and is dependent on a number of levers to aid a move towards a more circular system. These levers include improved learning and education that will help to build skills and identify opportunities to transition to a more circular economy. It is stated that collaboration across sectors and supply chains can create new systems, that can evolve and transform at pace when industry groups are working in partnership. New technology is also proposed to enable the development of circular flows of materials, resources and products that have not previously been possible.

North Yorkshire and City of York Local Area Energy Plans (2022) (Ref 21)

4.3.22 The report acknowledges the investment, skilled trades, supply chain capacity and co-ordination required for the region to achieve net zero by 2034. For the purpose of the report, the region was split into 4 separate areas, and pathways have been developed for each area to help contribute towards net zero. Potential opportunities for large scale ground-mounted solar was identified across all 4 areas. In addition, it was also acknowledged that large-scale solar farms are often considered to be the most cost-effective way of generating significant amounts of zero carbon electricity.

York, North Yorkshire and East Riding's Local Energy Strategy: Towards a Low Carbon Economy (2019) – Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (Ref 22)

4.3.23 The report provides a clear pathway towards a low carbon economy, to ensure that the area is well-positioned to realise the economic, environmental and social benefits from the transition.

4.3.24 It outlines that with a growing number of nationally significant energy assets, the energy transition has the potential to deliver substantial economic growth, job creation and export opportunities across the area.

4.3.25 To create a thriving low carbon economy, the report identifies the need to strengthen local supply chains, develop infrastructure, secure investment, grow the skills base, develop knowledge and innovation, build awareness, change behaviour, and influence policy to achieve substantial carbon savings and economic benefits.

4.3.26 The report highlights that skills, particularly in the energy and construction sectors, underpin growth of the low carbon economy, and that growing the skills base will be a critical enabler for decarbonisation.

Low Carbon and the Circular Economy: An Assessment of Skills Supply and Demand (2021) – LEP (Ref 23)

4.3.27 This assessment identifies that there is a skills gap that needs to be filled to achieve the demand from the renewables and solar sector, to meet the net-zero and climate-neutral targets. The report highlights some of the main barriers to achieving the future skills provision and makes several recommendations to improve the skills gap including: further engagement between the industry, and training and education providers on skill demands; improving the take-up of STEM (Science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects; exploiting opportunities to equip the unemployed and underutilised individuals with in-demand skills; and to increase the number of people obtaining in demand qualifications.

4.3.28 These recommendations aim to encourage more people to enter engineering, construction and automotive careers, that will provide foundations on which specific low carbon expertise can be quickly built and applied. It is believed that integrating low carbon content and options in existing courses and qualifications would further build up the required green skills. Furthermore, the assessment advises supporting the delivery of short top-up courses in specific technologies and tasks where skill gaps are present, such as, promoting and targeting those who already have core skills in electrical, engineering and construction, to upskill the current workforce.

York and North Yorkshire Skills Advisory Panel's refreshed Local Skills Report (2022) – (LEP) (Ref 24)

4.3.29 The Local Skills Report identifies that attracting new investment and jobs in high-growth and key areas, will help to retain and create, talented and highly skilled individuals. One strategic growth area the plan identifies is the renewable and low carbon energy sector, as it is forecasted that this industry will experience substantial employment growth. York and North Yorkshire have set a target to reach net zero by 2034 and become England's first carbon-neutral region. It is proposed this will be achieved by decarbonising the energy system and transitioning towards a circular economy, with an aim to expand the use of local supply chains.

4.3.30 Therefore, the plan identified a number of actions to implement, to ensure that the region's future skills could be met. This included broadening the subject range of higher apprenticeships available locally for young people to obtain higher-level technical skills required from the renewables sector, such as engineering and construction skills, which will also provide suitable occupational progression routes.

4.3.31 The plan also notes the need to provide opportunities to reskill and retrain those in the current workforce, to meet the future skill needs.

Upskilling and Reskilling across York and North Yorkshire – Stakeholder and Provider Perspectives (2021) – (LEP) (Ref 25)

4.3.32 The report identifies that around a fifth of vacancies in the LEP are the result of skill shortages, primarily within construction, manufacturing and utilities. In addition, the data indicates there are shortages in higher-skilled occupations with significant technical requirements, including STEM professionals, and a range of skilled trades.

4.3.33 The report details that emerging sectors, such as low carbon, green technology and life sciences require new skill provisions that has not yet been created or accredited for delivery. Some proposed solutions to combat the skills storage include, improving and aligning the education and training to better fit the profile of the labour market demand. It is also advised to develop partnerships between the industry and the training sector to better focus on particular skill creation and also improve progression pathways to enhance the career potential of the workforce. It is noted that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to go into apprenticeships than other pupils, and that apprenticeships are highly segregated by gender and subject, which should be addressed.

2021-2022 Delivery Plan – (LEP) (Ref 26)

4.3.34 The LEP Delivery Plan sets out how it aims to deliver the strategic vision of a 'greener, fairer, stronger economy'. In terms of creating a 'greener economy' the plan proposes to protect and prioritise natural capital, aid job creation and accelerate the transformation to a carbon negative economy. To create a 'fairer economy', it is advised that opportunities must be inclusive and open to everyone and help to raise the quality of life for all people and communities. Lastly, for a 'stronger economy', the workforce must be more resilient, and able to adapt to challenges and harness growth potential.

4.3.35 Some themes that cut across this vision include providing new training and learning opportunities to build skills for new job opportunities and investments, that support a 'greener, fairer, stronger economy.' Whereby people are not left behind to access support for learning, training, and employment.

4.4 Conclusion

4.4.1 Both national planning policy and local planning policies in the host authority support renewable energy developments and sustainable economic development opportunities to increase employment prospects.

4.4.2 The strategies from the LEP and authority economic growth strategies have been considered above, highlighting the priorities for development and investment in local skills and employment opportunities to improve the long-term economic prosperity for the area. The renewables sector has been identified as a high-growth sector with opportunities to bring higher-paid jobs to the area, and support a core labour market in the region, being the construction sector. The SSCEP seeks to promote the Proposed Development'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 in order to deliver beneficial SSCE outcomes.

5.1.2 As stated in earlier chapters, the opportunities outlined here respond to the local context and reflect the likely implications of the Proposed Development. The detailed SSCEP will be developed substantially in accordance with this oSSCEP and set out the detail of the commitments to be made and will be submitted for approval by North Yorkshire Council as the host authority as per a requirement in the DCO Application.

5.1.3 The detailed SSCEP will take into account the policies of the construction contractor, which will help to inform the detailed commitments that will be delivered by the Proposed Development.

5.1.4 Nothing in this oSSCEP would prevent the modification or omission of the control measures set out in this section. This will be confirmed (including confirming the absence or change to such measures would not lead to any materially new or materially different effects than those reported in the ES) at the time of submission of the detailed SSCEP.

5.2 Skills

5.2.1 For the Proposed Development to be successfully implemented, a variety of skills and disciplines are needed, as shown in Table 3-1. 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 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 Proposed Development.

5.2.4 In developing the complete SSCEP, the Applicant will promote apprenticeship opportunities during the various phases of the Proposed Development.

Workforce training

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

5.2.6 The intent would be to support the achievement of vocational qualifications (e.g. Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC), City and Guilds, NVQ, Higher National Certificate (HNC)) at various levels which are relevant to the delivery of the Proposed Development. For example, attendance of relevant courses will be encouraged in order to fill any skill gaps required to deliver the Proposed Development.

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 27). This suggests there may be opportunity to foster and develop technical and professional skills required to deliver the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development, 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 Proposed Development’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, meeting point or outside area within the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development an educational resource for the local area.

5.3 Employment

5.3.1 The expected employment benefits of the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development.

5.3.3 The Applicant will also seek to utilise local recruitment companies that can target employment opportunities for the Proposed Development 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 Solar Development Sites. Alternatively, a named Skills and Employment Manager for the Proposed Development 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:

1) workers of a certain gender, ethnicity, or age (e.g. women in construction and engineering, 16- to 24-year-olds or older workers); and
2) 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 Proposed Development.

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 Proposed Development. It is the intention of the Applicant to communicate with businesses and individuals interested in the energy sector in the region.

5.4.3 In order to boost the local presence within the Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development will take into account the objective of maximising benefits to local firms; while balancing this goal to ensure the Proposed Development 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 post DCO Application consent will include the following:

1) 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 Engineering, Procurement and Construction contractor to build out the Proposed Development.
2) 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.
3) If each action is successful, the outputs and, ultimately, the outcomes specified in the SSCEP, 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. As such, the Applicant’s approach to engage with external stakeholders will be discussed with North Yorkshire Council.

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 6-1 sets out a timeline for developing and delivering the SSCEP.

Table 6-1 Timescales for Developing and Delivering the SSCEP

Key Milestone	Actions
2026 – after DCO Application submission	Continue engaging with local stakeholders.
Late 2027 – Likely date for decision, assuming consent is granted	Develop the SSCEP into the detailed document substantially in accordance with the oSSCEP, confirming the objectives and activities to be followed. Seek approval on the detailed SSCEP from the Local Authorities, in accordance with the DCO. Send out invitations for contractors to tender for work (if relevant). Engage with local businesses and market opportunities to them.
2028 – earliest start point for construction	Continued engagement with local businesses to promote recruitment and to establish programs with young people. Develop strategies with contractors to deliver and monitor SSCEP requirements in contracts. SSCEP activities and outputs to be delivered during construction and operation. Activities and outputs to be monitored and reported on consistently to determine their successful completion. Any amendments or additional programmes to be added to the SSCEP must be agreed with the Local Authorities.

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 and included as part of the full SSCEP 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:

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

7.2 Measurable outputs and outcomes

7.2.1 Table 7-1 below sets out some potential measurable outputs and outcomes of the Proposed Development's SSCEP.

7.2.2 Outputs are the tangible results of pursuing the specific opportunities of the Proposed Development.

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 Proposed Development's lifespan. This information could be collected internally or externally by asking questions in a survey style manner, which may include the following:

1) What objectives or goals have been achieved?
2) Have the specific outcomes been realised?
3) What would have happened normally?
4) Was it value for money?
5) Should anything have been done differently?
6) What lessons can be taken into other projects?

Table 7-1 Potential Measurable Output 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. 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.

Opportunity Area	Opportunity	Potential Outputs	Potential Outcomes
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 (Light Valley Solar Limited) is a 100% subsidiary, are a signatory of the Solar Energy 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 Proposed 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 Proposed Development 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 Proposed Development's employees to come forward and voice their concerns will be addressed in the detailed SSCEP that will be submitted to the host Local Authority for approval.

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