THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

The Droves Solar Farm

Chapter 14: Socio-Economics (Clean)

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14 Socio-Economics

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of effects on Socio-Economics as a result of the Scheme.

14.1.2 This chapter identifies and proposes measures to address the potential impacts and likely significant effects on Socio-Economics, during the construction, operational and maintenance, and decommissioning phases.

14.1.3 The information presented within this chapter has been informed by the Scheme information provided in **ES Chapter 5: The Scheme [APP/6.1]**.

14.1.4 The following aspects have been considered within the Socio-Economics assessment process:

- An assessment of potential effects upon employment during the construction and decommissioning phase of the Scheme
- An assessment of potential effects upon the provision of education, skills, training and supply chain opportunities during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme
- An assessment of potential effects upon the demand for temporary workers' accommodation during the construction and decommissioning phase of the Scheme
- An assessment of potential effects upon land use during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme
- An assessment of potential effects upon commuting patterns during the construction and decommissioning phase of the Scheme
- An assessment of potential effects upon changes to local tourism assets during the operational phase of the Scheme

14.1.5 This Socio-Economics chapter has been prepared by Volterra Partners LLP (See **ES Appendix 1.1: Statement of Competence [APP/6.4]**).

14.1.6 It is noted that during Statutory Consultation, the PEIR presented a combined topic chapter covering both Socio-Economics and Human Health. For the purposes of the ES, these topics have been separated into distinct chapters. This approach has been adopted to improve clarity, ensure each topic is assessed in sufficient detail, and to align with the relevant technical guidance and assessment methodologies specific to each discipline.

14.1.7 This document has been updated at Deadline 6 to consider the Longmarsh Green Energy project, for which the EIA Scoping Report was submitted to PINS in October 2026, in

relation to the cumulative assessment of the Scheme. This demonstrates the proactive and robust nature of the Applicant's cumulative assessment, even though the information for Longmarsh Green Energy has been received at a late stage of the Examination. The document references have not been updated from the original submission. Please refer to the **Guide to the Application [APP/1.3.8]** for the list of current versions of documents.

14.2 Consultation

Scoping Opinion

14.2.1 On 8 November 2024, the Applicant submitted a Scoping Opinion Request to PINS (see **ES Appendix 2.1: EIA Scoping Opinion Request [APP/6.4]**) in support of a request for a Scoping Opinion from the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State pursuant to Regulation 10 of the EIA Regulations.

14.2.2 A Scoping Opinion (see **ES Appendix 2.2: Scoping Opinion [APP/6.4]**) was issued by the Planning Inspectorate on 18 December 2024.

14.2.3 The issues raised in the Scoping Opinion relating to Socio-Economics are summarised and responded to within **ES Appendix 14.1: Consultation and Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance [APP/6.4]**, which demonstrates how the matters raised in the Scoping Opinion are addressed in this ES.

Statutory Consultation and Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

14.2.4 Statutory consultation was held between 21 May 2025 and 9 July 2025. Relevant responses to the PEIR relating to Socio-Economics and how these have been addressed through the ES are set out within **ES Appendix 14.1: Consultation and Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance [APP/6.4]**.

14.2.5 Further engagement specific to Socio-Economics was not considered to be required following the PEIR responses above. A summary of all consultations with different stakeholders is detailed within **ES Appendix 14.1: Consultation and Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance [APP/6.4]**.

14.3 Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

14.3.1 A summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme will be considered relating to Socio-Economics is set out in ES **Appendix 14.1: Consultation and Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance [APP/6.4]**.

14.4 Assessment Assumptions and Limitations

14.4.1 The Socio-Economics assessment includes only those assumptions necessary to inform the baseline and assessment of potential effects, specifically:

- Construction employment – The construction workforce requirements have been provided by the Applicant, based on their experience delivering other solar farm projects across the UK
- Changes in demand for temporary accommodation – The assessment assumes that a proportion of the construction workforce will be non-local and require temporary accommodation within the Labour Catchment Area (LCA) (see Table 14.1). The Construction Industry Joint Council (CIJC) subsistence allowance (£45.65 per night for accommodation) has been used as an affordability threshold. (Ref 14-1). Bedspace availability has been estimated using published data on serviced accommodation, Airbnb, and campsites, applying average occupancy rates and room-to-bedspace ratios where required. In the absence of specific data for some sectors (e.g. Airbnb occupancy), worst-case assumptions have been applied to ensure a precautionary approach
- There is no specific guidance available which establishes a methodology for assessing the likely significant socio-economic effects of a solar farm. Therefore, the approach to the socio-economic assessment is based on professional judgement, previous experience and good practice. It is informed by the planning policy requirements set out within the NPS EN-1 (Ref 14-2), which identifies the potential beneficial and adverse socio-economic impacts that should be considered as a result of energy developments

14.4.2 The following limitations are recognised and have been taken into account in applying a proportionate and precautionary approach:

- The assessment has been undertaken against a benchmark of current socio-economic baseline conditions within the Local Area (see Table 14.1) and wider geographies, based on the most recently published data (typically from 2022 to 2025). In cases where more recent data is unavailable, the most up-to-date suitable alternative has been used as a proxy
- Time series data has been reviewed where available to contextualise short-term anomalies, including any lasting impacts from the coronavirus pandemic
- Wider socio-economic effects, such as leakage or displacement, are difficult to quantify due to limitations in data and the context-specific nature of these impacts. While the Additionality Guide provides a structured framework for considering such effects, it often requires the application of professional judgement, particularly where local evidence is limited or where impacts extend beyond the immediate study area. In these instances, assumptions and reasoning have been made transparently and are clearly explained in the relevant sections of the assessment

- There is inherent uncertainty regarding the phasing of cumulative developments and the timing of associated infrastructure delivery. This introduces further limitations to the accuracy of cumulative impact predictions

14.5 Assessment Methodology

14.5.1 This section sets out the scope and methodology for the assessment of the impacts of the Scheme on Socio-Economics.

Sources of Information

14.5.2 Existing baseline socio-economic conditions have been established through the interpretation of nationally recognised research, data and survey information. The year 2025 or the most recent data period is presented to reflect the existing baseline position. The following sources of information that have been consulted in the preparation of this chapter:

- ONS, Census 2021 (Ref 14-3)
- ONS, Annual Population Survey (Ref 14-4)
- ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (Ref 14-5)
- ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; (Ref 14-6)
- Visit Britain (Ref 14-7)

14.5.3 Whilst the existing baseline conditions are always presented so that current issues are identified, consideration of the impact against a future baseline is considered robust to allow for a reasonable worst-case assessment of each effect. It is not always best practice to consider all effects against the existing baseline, given that it is highly likely that baseline conditions evolve in the time between today and the year that the Scheme would be operational.

14.5.4 Accordingly, where possible and information is available, a future baseline has been developed for socio-economic conditions, reflecting anticipated changes in population, employment, and economic context over time.

Potential Impacts

14.5.5 Embedded mitigation measures being incorporated into the design and construction of the Scheme are set out in Section 14.7. Prior to the implementation of any mitigation (embedded or additional), the Scheme has the potential to give rise to beneficial or adverse effects on socio-economic receptors, during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases in the following ways:

- Employment (Direct, indirect and induced construction jobs supported by the delivery of the Scheme) – Beneficial
- Provision of education, skills, training and supply chain – Beneficial

- Changes in demand for temporary workers accommodation – Adverse
- Effect on land uses – Adverse
- Changes in commuting patterns – Adverse
- Changes to local tourism assets – Adverse

Study Area

14.5.6 Table 14.1 outlines the various geographical study areas used in this assessment, either as direct study areas or geographical comparators.

14.5.7 The spatial scope may vary widely, dependent on the nature of the effect. Effects on the receptors identified is possible at the local, sub-regional and national levels. Study Areas have been informed using professional judgement on the geographical extent of where likely significant socio-economic effects may be reasonably expected to occur as a result of the Scheme. The Study Area does not necessarily capture where the receptor originates from, rather it indicates where the socio-economic effects are expected to occur.

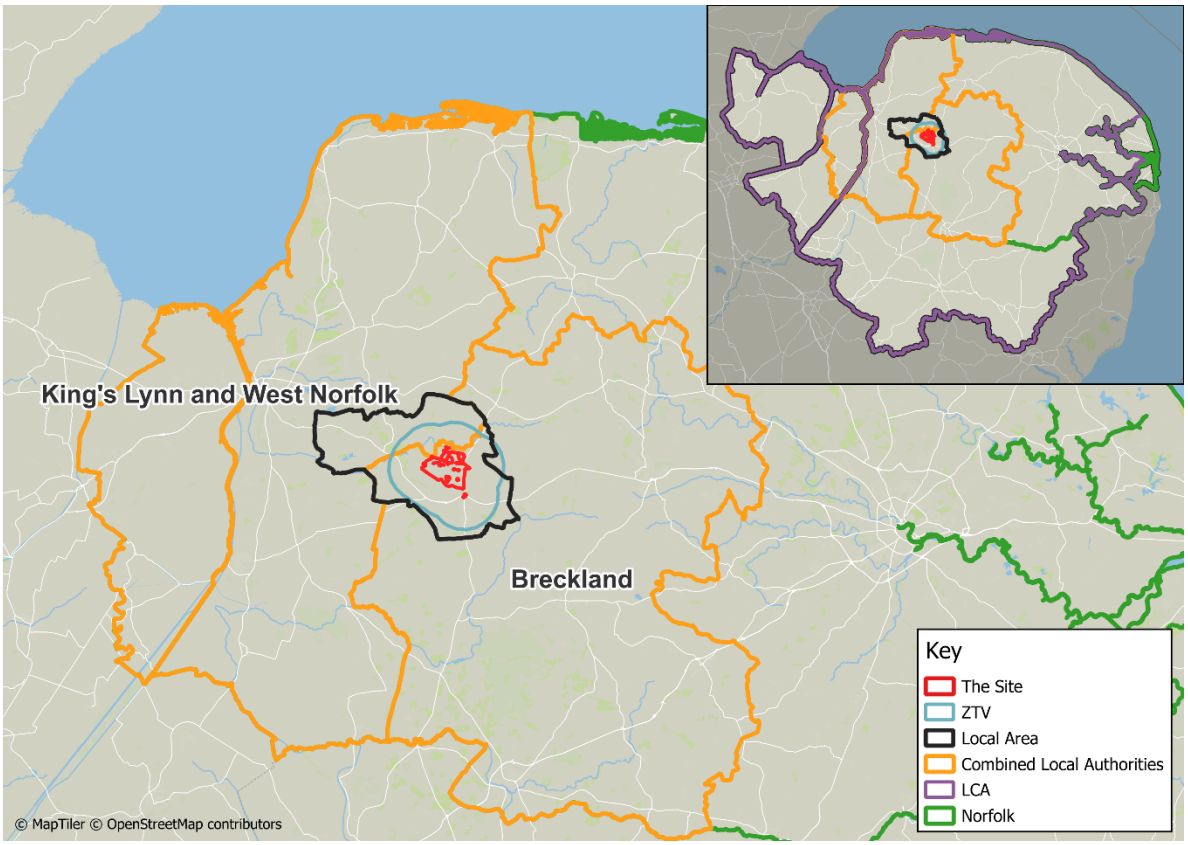
Table 14.1 Geographical Study Area Definitions and Rationale

Geographical study area	Definition
The Site	The Order limits.
Local Area	The Local Area comprises of the following Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) surrounding the Site:[1] King's Lynn and West Norfolk 012D, Breckland 002C, Breckland 007A, Breckland 007B, Breckland 007C, Breckland 007D, Breckland 007E.
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	A 3km radius from the Scoping Study Area, aligning with the ZTV – the maximum area of assessment for landscape and visual impact within **ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual [APP/6.2]** and is used to assess the effects on access to PRoW, open space, and physical activity and changes to local tourism assets.
Combined Local Authorities	King's Lynn & West Norfolk (KLWN), and Breckland. This is used to assess provision of education, skills, training and supply chain.
Transport and Access Study Area	The Study Area, defined in **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]**, includes nine road links expected to be used by vehicles accessing the Scheme, and is used for the changes in commuting patterns effect.

[1] An LSOA is a small geographical area with a population of 1,000–3,000 residents, or 400–1,200 households.

Geographical study area	Definition
LCA	A 60-minute travel time to the Site, as defined by the Local Authorities, intersects more than half of the area within the following local authorities: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, South Holland, Breckland, Broadland, KLWN, North Norfolk, South Norfolk, Mid Suffolk, West Suffolk, Norwich, used for employment and related effects since this is considered a reasonable time in which workers would commute to the Site.
Sub-regional (As outlined in **ES Appendix 2.1: EIA Scoping Opinion Request [APP/6.4]**, the scoping of socio-economics referred to Norfolk as the ceremonial county. For the purposes of this assessment, the ceremonial county and the sub-region are considered to cover the same area of Norfolk.)	Norfolk, mostly used for context.
Regional	East of England, mostly used for context.
National	England, mostly used for context.

Figure 14.1 Geographical Study Areas



(Source: © MapTiler © OpenStreetMap contributors)

Temporal Scope – Assessment Years

14.5.8 This section discusses the temporal scope that has been considered in the assessment of likely significant socio-economic effects.

14.5.9 The construction phase is anticipated to take up to 24 months. The final programme will be dependent on the detailed layout design and potential environmental constraints on the timing of construction activities. However, the Scheme is anticipated to energise in Q4 2033 or as early as National Grid are able to offer. Based on Q3 2033 energisation, it is anticipated that the earliest the construction phase would commence would be Q3 2031. There is likely to be a pre-construction period preceding the construction phase of approximately six months (Q1 and Q2 2031) to allow site preparation works.

14.5.10 The temporal scope will vary depending on the nature of the effect. The assessment establishes parameters that are likely to result in the maximum adverse likely significant effect (the worst-case scenario). For example, any change to the existing land uses is expected to begin occurring during the construction phase (2031 – 2033) and therefore 2031 is considered as the worst-case scenario as that is the earliest that receptors could be affected. The operational phase of the Scheme is proposed to be 60 years, from 2033 to 2093. Subject to the replacement activities referred to below, the effects are expected to be largely consistent across the operational phase. Operational effects are considered at the first year of operation which is therefore expected to be representative across the whole 60 year period.

14.5.11 During the operational phase, other than in the context of a programme of replacement, activity on the Solar PV Site would be restricted principally to vegetation management, equipment maintenance and servicing, ad hoc replacement and renewal of any components that fail or reach the end of their lifespan, periodic fence inspection, vegetation management along accesses, permissive paths and landscape ecological mitigation maintenance, and monitoring to ensure the continued effective operation of the Scheme. During the anticipated 60-year operational life of the Scheme, it is expected that there will be a requirement for periodic replacement of some of the electrical infrastructure. Along the Grid Connection Infrastructure, operational activity may consist of routine inspections and any reactive maintenance from National Grid.

14.5.12 The frequency of regular maintenance visits would reasonably be expected to be limited to no more than five visits per month to the Solar PV Site. Limited use of HGVs may be required for the ad-hoc replacement of components.

14.5.13 Decommissioning will occur following the 60-year operational phase and is anticipated to take approximately 12 to 24 months. While all the Solar PV Array including PV Modules, Mounting Structures, Inverters and Transformers, the BESS and Customer Substation would be removed during the decommissioning phase, it is assumed that the National Grid Substation and the Grid Connection Infrastructure would remain in situ.

14.5.14 Further detail on the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme can be found in **ES Chapter 5: The Scheme [APP/6.1]**.

Impact Assessment Methodology

14.5.15 The Socio-Economics assessment follows the approach to undertaking EIA as explained in **ES Chapter 2: EIA Process and Methodology [APP/6.2]**. The methodology for attributing sensitivity of receptors, magnitude of impacts and the significance of effects in relation to Socio-Economics is described further below in this chapter of the ES.

14.5.16 There is no specific guidance available which establishes a methodology for assessing the likely significant socio-economic effects of a solar farm. Therefore, the approach to the socio-economic assessment is based on professional judgement, previous experience and good practice. It is informed by the planning policy requirements set out within the NPS EN-1, which identifies the potential beneficial and adverse socio-economic impacts that should be considered as a result of energy developments (Ref 14-2).

Sensitivity of Receptor

14.5.17 The sensitivity of likely impacted receptors, defined depending on the vulnerability, recoverability and value/importance of the receptor, to potential effects arising from the Scheme is assessed in line with the below, as detailed in Table 14.2.

14.5.18 Receptor sensitivity is the ability of a given receptor to respond to change and has been assessed on a case-by-case basis, using professional judgement, informed by the baseline statistics and stakeholder engagement to date.

Table 14.2 Sensitivity Criteria of Identified Receptor

Sensitivity	Description
High	Representative of where a receptor has limited ability to respond to change, possibly due to no surplus capacity / high scarcity.
Medium	Representative of where changes to the receptor would bring about noticeable changes in conditions in the area.
Low	Representative of where a receptor is particularly responsive to change or able to cope with change without substantial effects on existing status or viability.
Negligible	Representative of where a receptor is unlikely to be affected by change, due to its high capacity to accommodate impacts without any noticeable effect on its status or function.

Based on the criteria set out in Table 14.2 the receptors that could experience likely significant socio-economic effects are shown below in Table 14.3.

14.5.19 Receptor groups include the general population and vulnerable groups. This chapter considers potential socio-economic impact on tourism in the Local Area, including any impacts on the visitor economy. However, visitors are not considered as a receptor group in this chapter as it is not expected they would experience any socio-economic effects when visiting the Combined Local Authorities for a short period of time. GB tourism statistics estimate that the average duration of Norfolk trips is three nights (Ref 14-8). Therefore, it is not likely that visitors will be impacted by the Scheme.

14.5.20 An **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) [APP/7.2]** has also been submitted as part of this DCO application. The EqIA provides a detailed and fine-grained assessment of receptor population groups, identifying those who may be disproportionately or differentially affected by the Proposed Development.

Table 14.3 Identified Receptors

Sensitivity	Identified Receptor
General population	Existing and future residents.
	Existing and future workers.
Businesses	Owners of businesses and properties who experience changes in the environment, including the activity and employment supported by these businesses.

Magnitude of Impact

14.5.21 The categorisation of the magnitude of impact takes into account the following factors:

- Extent
- Duration
- Frequency
- Reversibility

14.5.22 The magnitude of impact is the level of change caused by the Scheme and is defined in Table 14.4.

Table 14.4 Criteria for Determining Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude of Impact	Description
High	Adverse: Total loss or major/substantial alteration to key elements or features of the baseline (pre-development) conditions such that the post-development character, composition, or attributes will be fundamentally degraded.

Magnitude of Impact	Description
	Beneficial: Major enhancement or substantial improvement to key elements or features of the baseline (pre-development) conditions such that the post-development character, composition, or attributes will be fundamentally improved.
Medium	Adverse: Loss or alteration to one or more key elements or features of the baseline conditions such that the post-development character, composition, or attributes of the baseline will be materially diminished.
	Beneficial: Improvement to one or more key elements or features of the baseline conditions such that the post-development character, composition, or attributes will be materially enhanced.
Low	Adverse: A minor shift away from baseline conditions. Change arising from the loss or alteration will be discernible/detectable but not material. The underlying character, composition, or attributes of the baseline condition will remain broadly similar to the pre-development circumstances.
	Beneficial: A minor shift away from baseline conditions. Change arising from improvements will be discernible/detectable but not material. The underlying character, composition, or attributes of the baseline condition will remain broadly similar to the pre-development circumstances.
Negligible	Adverse: Very little change from baseline conditions. Change is barely distinguishable and approximates a 'no change' situation.
	Beneficial: Very little change from baseline conditions. Improvement is barely distinguishable and approximates a 'no change' situation.

Categorising Scale of Effect

14.5.23 The predicted significance of the effect is determined through a standard method of assessment and based on professional judgement, considering both the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the impact, as shown in Table 14.5.

14.5.24 There are four categories demonstrating the scale of effect:

- Negligible
- Minor
- Moderate
- Major

14.5.25 The nature of effects is defined as either: temporary (construction and decommissioning phase) or long-term (operational phase).

14.5.26 This assessment also identifies whether the effect is 'direct' (i.e., resulting without any intervening factors) or 'indirect' (i.e., not directly caused, or resulting from something else).

Table 14.5 Scale of Effect

Magnitude of Impact	Sensitivity			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Negligible
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

14.5.27 The nature of effects has been defined as either beneficial or adverse.

Determining the Significance of Effect

14.5.28 The following criteria are applied:

- Moderate or Major effects are classed as 'significant'
- Minor effects are classed as 'not significant', although they may be a matter of local concern
- Negligible effects are classed as 'not significant'

Summary of Effects

14.5.29 The following table summarises the above information, showing the receptors, study area and temporal scope for each effect, as shown below in Table 14.6.

Table 14.6 Potential Socio-Economic Effects, Receptors, Study Area and Assessment Years

Potential effect	Socio-economic receptor(s)	Study Area	Assessment year(s)
Employment (Direct, indirect and induced construction jobs supported by the delivery of the Scheme)	Residents, workers, and businesses	LCA	Construction and decommissioning phases

Potential effect	Socio-economic receptor(s)	Study Area	Assessment year(s)
Provision of education, skills, training and supply chain	Residents, workers, and businesses	Combined Local Authorities	Construction, operational, and decommissioning phases
Changes in demand for temporary workers accommodation	Residents and businesses	LCA	Construction worker peak (Q2 2032) 2093
Effect on land uses	Residents, workers, and businesses	LCA	Construction, operational and decommissioning phases
Changes in commuting patterns	Residents, workers, and businesses	Transport and Access Study Area (as defined in **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2])**	Construction and decommissioning phases
Changes to local tourism assets	Residents, and businesses	ZTV	Operational phase

14.6 Baseline Conditions

14.6.1 The methodology used to determine the sensitivity of baseline conditions to relevant receptors is outlined in paragraph 14.5.1 onwards. Relevant Study Areas for the baseline conditions, presented by likely significant effect, are also defined and illustrated in Figure 14.1.

The Order limits

14.6.2 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC), and Breckland Council (BC) who are the host authorities, and adjacent to the administrative boundary of the Borough Council of KLWN. A full description of the Order limits is provided in **ES Chapter 5: The Scheme [APP/6.2]**.

Employment (Construction and Decommissioning Phase)

Existing Baseline

14.6.3 The Scheme is expected to support a considerable workforce over the construction and decommissioning phases. As such, it is necessary to consider the existing baseline of construction employment and construction workforce availability.

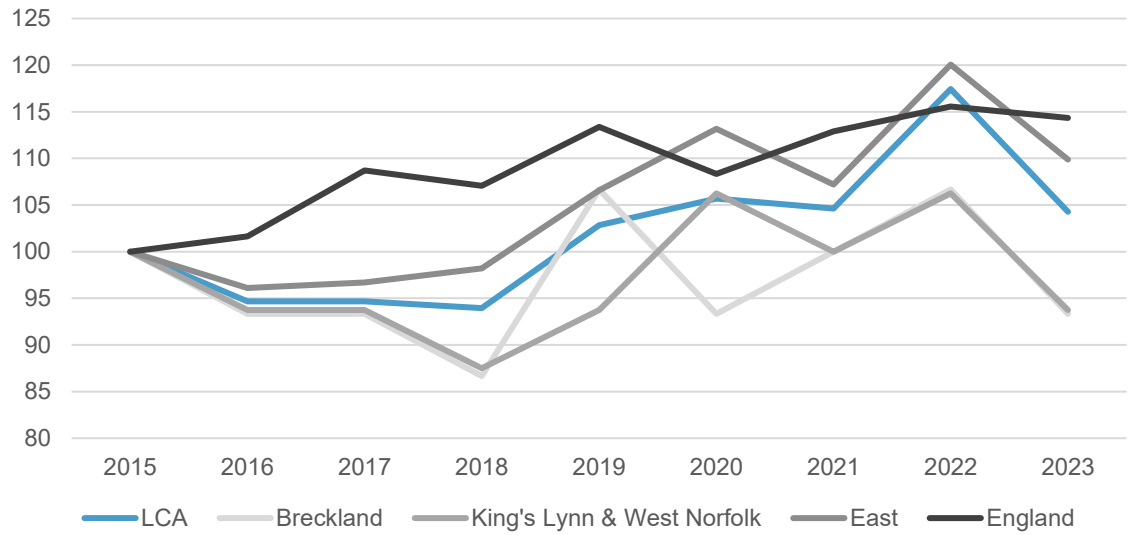
14.6.4 Within the LCA, there are 62,700 residents who work in the construction industry, equivalent to 9.7% of all employed residents. This proportion is higher than the national average (8.7% of residents) but broadly in line with the regional average (10.0% of residents) (Ref 14-9).

14.6.5 Alternatively, using workplace-based data, there are 36,600 individuals working in the construction industry within the LCA, equivalent to 6.0% of total workers (Ref 14-5). The stark differential between the resident-based and workplace-based analysis suggests that a significant number of construction workers who reside in the LCA commute out of the area for work.

14.6.6 This finding is supported by origin destination data. Using origin destination data from the 2021 Census, it is estimated that 15.6% of LCA residents commute out of the area for work (Ref 14-10). A comparison of workplace-based and resident-based data from 2021 indicates that at least 41.6% of construction workers who live in the LCA commute out of the area for work, significantly higher than the LCA average (Ref 14-10).

14.6.7 The number of people working in the construction industry within the LCA has risen by 4.3% between 2015 and 2023, lower than the regional and national averages of 9.9% and 14.4%, respectively (Ref 14-5). Construction employment in the LCA, which can be seen in Figure 14.2, declined significantly between 2015 and 2018, before recovering and then experiencing a second minor decline between 2022 and 2023. Breckland, and KLWN, meanwhile, experienced a 6.7% and 6.2% decline in the number of construction workers working in each district respectively (Ref 14-5).

Figure 14.2 Construction Employment Growth (2015=100)



(Source: ONS 2024. Business Register and Employment Survey)

14.6.8 The unemployment rate in the LCA is 3.7%, lower than the regional average of 4.2% and significantly below the national rate of 4.9% (Ref 14-11). The unemployment rate in LCA remains below the regional and national averages for each of the 16 – 24, 25 – 34, 35 – 49, 50 – 64, and 65+ age groups.

14.6.9 This is balanced by a relatively high economic inactivity rate (41.2%), which is higher than the regional (38.2%) and national (39.1%) rates (Ref 14-11). This high inactivity rate is largely driven by an increased prevalence of retired residents, who account for 27.0% of the 16+ population, higher than the regional and national averages of 22.9% and 21.5%, respectively.

14.6.10 The potential challenges faced by high numbers of retired residents are recognised by local policy. The King's Lynn & West Norfolk Economic Vision and Strategy states that the area needs 'more working age residents, and those residents need jobs and homes to live in' to achieve economic growth (Ref 14-12). This is echoed in other areas of the LCA. The North Norfolk Economic Strategy and Action Plan, notes the pressures that an aging population could put on its long-term labour supply and on its social care provision and funding model (Ref 14-13). Likewise, the South Holland Economic Action Plan highlights its small (relative to the total population) number of working age residents as a key economic weakness of the local authority (Ref 14-14).

Future Baseline

14.6.11 The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) estimates that there will be a 0.8% yearly increase in the number of construction workers in the East of England between 2024 and 2028 (Ref 14-15). There is a currently a construction skills crisis and the growth estimates reflect the demand in the area (Ref 14-16). Applying this figure to the LCA, it is estimated that the construction workforce will rise to 65,300 by 2028, a 4% increase from 2023. There

are no available estimates for the growth of construction employment between 2028 and 2031, and so the 2024 to 2028 growth rate of 0.8% is used for that later period as a best approximation. When this is applied, it is estimated that the construction workforce in the LCA will equal 66,800 in 2031, an increase of 7% from 2023.

14.6.12 Past construction employment growth across the LCA casts doubts upon these figures, however. Between 2015 and 2023 construction employment in the LCA grew at a significantly slower pace than employment in the East of England, and so it may not be realistic to assume that it will match the East of England growth rates going forward (Ref 14-5). Although past trends suggest that construction employment growth in the LCA has been slower than the regional average, overall the evidence indicates that construction employment is expected to continue to grow, reflecting continued demand for skilled labour and investment in the sector.

Sensitivity

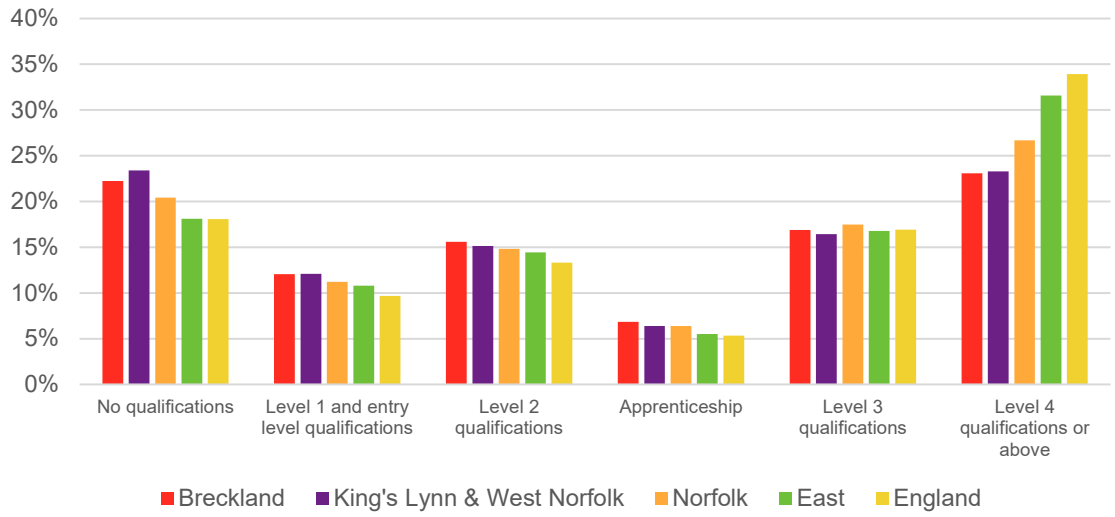
14.6.13 Overall, the LCA has a high proportion of residents employed in the construction industry and a relatively low unemployment rate across all age groups compared to the national average. Despite the high concentration of construction workers, construction employment growth in the LCA has been significantly lower than regional and national averages. However, employment in the construction industry remained relatively stable during the pandemic, suggesting a degree of resilience within the sector. Construction employment opportunities are typically short-term, with workers often employed on temporary contracts and needing to secure new work upon completion. The construction sector is also facing a skills shortage, increasing the demand for more workers. The anticipated growth reflects strong local demand, with numerous projects being brought forward. Therefore, based on this, residents, workers and businesses are expected to have a medium sensitivity to changes in employment.

Provision of Education, Skills, Training, and Supply Chain (Construction, Operation, and Decommissioning Phase)

Existing Baseline

14.6.14 Residents of Breckland and KLWN have a lower level of qualifications compared to geographical comparators on average, with a higher proportion of residents achieving no qualifications, and a lower proportion of residents achieving Level 4 qualifications or above (Ref 14-17) (Note: Level 4 qualifications are degree level, higher education, or professional qualifications).

Figure 14.3 Highest Level of Qualification by Study Area



(Source: ONS, 2024. Census 2021: RM049 - Highest level of qualification by ethnic group Note: Qualification levels are defined as follows: Level 1 and entry level (up to 4 GCSEs or equivalent basic skills qualifications); Level 2 (5 or more GCSEs at grades A–C / 9–4 or equivalent); Level 3 (A levels or equivalent advanced vocational qualifications); and Level 4 or above (degree level, higher education, or professional qualifications))*

14.6.15 Breckland has a strong apprenticeship start rate (489 per 100,000 population) compared to the regional average (456 per 100,000 population),but falls short of the national average (493 per 100,000 population) (Ref 14-19). KLWN, meanwhile, has a significantly lower apprenticeship start rate than all geographical comparators, standing at 379 starts per 100,000 population (Ref 14-19).

14.6.16 Both Breckland and KLWN have high construction apprenticeship start rates, standing at 41 and 48 starts per 100,000 population respectively, higher than the regional (35) and national (39) averages (Ref 14-19).

14.6.17 Additionally, KLWN has a lower proportion of apprenticeship starts at the highest skill levels than geographical comparators, with just 37% of starts being in the 'higher' comparator compared to the regional (42%) and national (39%) averages. Breckland, meanwhile, performs slightly below the national average, with 38% of apprenticeship starts being in the 'higher' category (Ref 14-19).

14.6.18 Residents of Breckland and KLWN have average hourly wages (£16.88 and £16.26, respectively) that are lower than the sub-regional (£17.19), regional (£19.26), and national (£18.83) averages (Ref 14-6). The wages of the two local authorities have experienced greater growth since 2010 than geographical comparators but are yet to catch them in absolute terms (Ref 14-6).

14.6.19 The challenges faced with respect to education, skills, and training are recognised in the Breckland Skills Plan (2024), which flags the low level of skills attainment in the local authority, as well as acute skills shortage being faced by businesses. It further highlights

the difficulties in accessing skills training for residents of the local authority, with just 17% of residents being able to access skills training within a 15-minute journey by public transport (Ref 14-19). It states that construction and engineering are among the sectors most affected by skills shortages and emphasises the need for future skills strategies to address this challenge.

14.6.20 Table 14.7 maps occupations to skill levels, with Level 4 representing the highest skill level required for a job. It shows that Breckland and KLWNhave a higher concentration in occupations requiring level 4 skills – 46% and 36% respectively, compared to other skills levels. However, both of these figures are below the regional and national averages (Ref 14-4). Note: Level 4: Relates to what are termed 'professional' occupations and high-level managerial positions. Occupations at this level normally require a degree or equivalent period of relevant work experience.

Table 14.7 Skill Levels Matched to Resident Jobs

Skill level mapped to occupation	Breckland	KLWN*	East	England
4	46%	36%	48%	47%
3	30%	22%	24%	24%
2	17%	27%	19%	20%
1	7%	15%	9%	9%

(Source: ONS, 2025. Annual Population Survey Note: May not sum due to rounding.)

14.6.21 This challenge is noted by the Breckland HEDNA (2024), which states that the shortage of high-level skills creates a barrier to attracting and retaining high skill and high wage employment (Ref 14-20). This is also recognised by the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Economic Strategy, which notes the low qualification attainment, high proportion of residents who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), and high levels of economic inactivity are key issues for the area (Ref 14-12).

14.6.22 The Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy flags the 'rural skills gap' as a key concern, noting the mismatch between the skill levels of young people in Norfolk's rural areas and the needs of present and future businesses (Ref 14-21). The report places particular emphasis on digital skills, stating that Norfolk's rural residents need to improve these skills in order to keep pace with recent and future increases in the level of digitalisation and automation within the workplace. The Norfolk and Suffolk economic strategy notes a shortage of skills in the engineering sector and the need to support skills and learning in STEM fields to support the area's growing clean energy sector (Ref 14-21).

14.6.23 Skills challenges with respect to construction are highlighted at the Norfolk level, too. The Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan Review, for example, highlights the

need to ensure that construction skills and the supply of skilled tradespeople are sufficient to meet the demand placed by the range of NSIPs coming forward in the area (Ref 14-22). This is echoed by the Norfolk and Suffolk economic strategy, which highlights construction as a key sector that will underpin clean growth within the two counties, including clean energy, agri-food, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and creative digital industries (Ref 14-22). It further notes, however, that the construction industry faces labour shortages across the two counties, and that there is a lack of tutors in the industry (Ref 14-22).

14.6.24 The skills shortage in engineering roles is also noted by the Breckland Skills Plan, which highlights the need to focus future skills provision on the sector (Ref 14-19).

Future Baseline

14.6.25 Whilst Breckland currently faces challenges with respect to education, skills, and training, the Breckland Skills Plan (2024) outlines a range of measures aimed at improving outcomes in all areas (Ref 14-19). The Future Breckland board states that:

"they also see a very Breckland skills plan being shamelessly focused on supporting local economic need, and future economic vision. This means making sure they can effectively address the needs of the local labour market. Which will necessitate a focus around key sectors like manufacturing, engineering, food, construction and health. It also means skills being a key part of their strategy for creating more higher-value, higher-wage opportunities within the local economy."

14.6.26 Likewise, the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Economic Vision and Strategy outlines the aim of increasing the rate of Level 4 + qualification attainment (Ref 14-12).

14.6.27 The need to ensure that construction skills and engineering are prioritised and brought forth is expressed across a range of local policy documents, including the Breckland Skills Plan and the Norfolk and Suffolk economic strategy (as identified above). This demonstrates that both Breckland and KLWN are prioritising education and skills, particularly in the sectors targeted by the Scheme. It is also anticipated that a number of infrastructure projects will be brought into the area, highlighting the need for the necessary facilities and capabilities to deliver them effectively.

Sensitivity

14.6.28 Breckland, and KLWN face a range of challenges with respect to education, skills and training. Residents of the two Local Authorities have lower levels of educational attainment than regional and national averages, are employed in professional and managerial occupations at lower rates, and receive lower hourly wages. Construction skills are also noted as being a key issue by Breckland and Norfolk policy documents, both to meet current demand and to meet the future demands placed by forthcoming NSIPs. Based on this evidence, residents, workers, and businesses are expected to have a high sensitivity to changes in education, skills, and training.

Changes in Demand for Temporary Accommodation (Construction and Decommissioning Phase)

Existing Baseline

14.6.29 The Scheme has the potential to require a significant workforce during the construction and decommissioning phases. The construction workforce is expected to include workers from outside the LCA. While some may commute, it is reasonable to assume that a portion will require temporary accommodation. As such, this section assesses the current stock of accommodation that could house these workers across the LCA (Table 14.8) and also the Combined Local Authorities (Table 14.9). Baseline data is collected, and the effect assessment is undertaken, for both the LCA and the Combined Local Authorities to reflect uncertainty regarding the travel time that temporary workers would be willing to commute between their temporary accommodation and the Site.

14.6.30 The CIJC sets out a subsistence allowance for construction workers in its Working Rule Agreement, setting the allowance at just over £50.65 per night, which includes a £5 allocation for food and drink (Ref 14-23). Therefore, £45.65 accommodation allowance per night is used as the basis for affordability calculations.

14.6.31 The following sources are used to inform the temporary accommodation baseline:

- Serviced accommodation stock is sourced from CoStar, which outputs the number of rooms at hotels, hostels, bed and breakfast establishments, and serviced apartments in the area (Ref 14-24). This analysis also provides occupancy rates for such establishments, and as such, peak occupancies are applied to the year stock to provide a worst-case assessment
- To estimate the number of bedspaces that would be provided by the available rooms, the ratio of bedspaces to rooms is taken from a VisitBritain (2016) survey of tourist accommodation in the area (Ref 14-25)
- CoStar also provides the revenue per available room (RevPAR) for serviced accommodation stock by hotel class (Ref 14-24). The average RevPAR by class is divided by the average number of bedspaces per room (2.4) to estimate the RevPAR per bedspace. Based on this data, the ‘Midscale and Economy’ and ‘Upscale & Upper Midscale’ use classes are included in the baseline, as they are expected to be affordable based on the CIJC allowance. The average RevPAR per bedspace for these use classes is £22.81 and £29.52, respectively, both significantly below £45.65. While the ‘Luxury & Upper Upscale’ hotel class has an average RevPAR per bedspace of £50.61, which is only marginally above £45.65, it is conservatively assumed that no bedspaces in this class would be affordable. As such, the figures presented represent a worst-case scenario

- An updated figure for campsite bedspaces is not available. However, campsites are another form of temporary accommodation that could be used by construction workers.[2] Therefore, the stock figure is based on the VisitBritain (2016) survey. The definition of campsites is drawn from Eurostat ("Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks") and therefore may include a proportion of spaces intended for tents, which would not be suitable for accommodating construction workers (Ref 14-26). To reflect this, and recognising that not all campsites are authorised or appropriate for housing workers, given variations in local planning policies, zoning regulations, and site-specific circumstances, a 75% reduction has been applied to the total number of campsite bedspaces. This adjustment accounts for the fact that not all campsite accommodation would be practical or permissible for worker use. Given the uncertainty surrounding the existing stock of suitable campsite spaces, the total bedspaces excluding campsites is also presented as a conservative sensitivity test
- Airbnb is considered a temporary accommodation option for construction workers and data on the available stock has been sourced from the ONS (2023) (Ref 14-27). The occupancy rate for Airbnb stock is not readily available. Therefore, as a worst-case scenario, the maximum occupancy rate for holiday accommodation from Visit Britain has been applied to Airbnb bed spaces (Ref 14-28). Affordability was calculated by applying a rate of £45.65 per person per night, adjusting based on the number of rooms in the property. For example, a two-bedroom property was assessed as affordable if the total cost was less than £91.30 (£45.65 x 2) (Ref 14-29). This method ensured that the affordability threshold was scaled according to the property size

Table 14.8 Temporary Accommodation Stock in LCA

Type of temporary accommodation	Total bed spaces	Occupancy rate	Affordability rate	Total available and affordable bed spaces
Serviced (CoStar, 2025)	19,700	76%	87%	4,000
Campsites (2016)*	11,600	70%	100%	900
Airbnb (2023)	71,600	83%	39%	4,700
Total	**103,200**			**9,600**

[2] Campsites and caravan parks are occasionally utilised to accommodate construction workers during major infrastructure projects in the United Kingdom. For example, a holiday park in Somerset was temporarily repurposed to house up to 900 workers associated with the Hinkley Point C power station development, while caravan accommodation in rural Warwickshire has been used to support workers employed on the HS2 project (Ref 14-30). Such uses are therefore considered realistic and have been included in this assessment.

Type of temporary accommodation	Total bed spaces	Occupancy rate	Affordability rate	Total available and affordable bed spaces
Total (excluding campsites)	**91,300**			**8,700**

(Sources: CoStar, 2025; Visit Britain, 2016. England Accommodation stock audit Visit Britain, 2025. England Hotel Occupancy: latest; ONS, 2024. Hosts, listings, and bed spaces of short-term lets, UK: 2023 Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding *A 75% reduction in campsite bed spaces has been applied to reflect uncertainty about the existing stock of such accommodation and its suitability for temporary workers).

Table 14.9 Temporary Accommodation Stock in the Combined Local Authorities

Type of temporary accommodation	Total bed spaces	Occupancy rate	Affordability rate	Total available and affordable bed spaces
Serviced (CoStar, 2025)	4,300	76%	87%	900
Campsites (2016)*	4,100	70%	100%	300
Airbnb (2023)	20,500	83%	39%	1,300
Total	**28,800**			**2,500**
Total (excluding campsites)	**24,800**			**2,100**

(Sources: CoStar, 2025; Visit Britain, 2016. England Accommodation stock audit Visit Britain, 2025. England Hotel Occupancy: latest; ONS, 2024. Hosts, listings, and bed spaces of short-term lets, UK: 2023 Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding *A 75% reduction in campsite bed spaces has been applied to reflect uncertainty about the existing stock of such accommodation and its suitability for temporary workers).

Future Baseline

14.6.32 There are no available data sources to forecast temporary accommodation stock over time. In addition, there is uncertainty around whether planned developments will come forward as expected. To take a precautionary, worst-case approach, this assessment does not consider a future baseline for temporary accommodation. Instead, sensitivity is assessed against the existing baseline. This ensures that the assessment represents a worst-case scenario.

Sensitivity

14.6.33 The sensitivity of residents and businesses to changes in demand for temporary workers accommodation is judged to be low on the basis that there are approximately 9,600 available and affordable bedspaces in the LCA (8,700 excluding campsites) and 2,500 in the Combined Local Authorities (2,100 excluding campsites). This is based on a worst-case assessment of availability, using conservative assumptions such as peak occupancy rates and affordability rate.

Effect on Land Uses (Construction, Operational, and Decommissioning Phase)

Existing Baseline

14.6.34 In 2024, there was 8.7 million hectares (ha) of utilised agricultural area (UAA), accounting for 67% of England's total land area (Ref 14-31). Agricultural land is classified into five grades, based on physical and chemical characteristics that determine its suitability for food production. These grades are numbered 1 to 5, with Grade 3 further divided into two subgrades (3a and 3b). Land that falls within Grades 1, 2, or 3a is classified as 'best and most versatile' (BMV). **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** provides a baseline of the existing conditions, it identifies that 42% of agricultural land in England is of BMV quality.

14.6.35 Survey results of the Site (**ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2])** identifies that the agricultural land within the Site represents 0.005% of the UK's utilised agricultural area.

14.6.36 The breakdown of the survey results of the Site is shown in Table 14.10. It shows that 41% of the land is of poor quality, 54% is identified as BMV land, and the remaining 5% comprises non-agricultural land, woodland, non-surveyed areas, and roads.

Table 14.10 ALC Survey Results

Grade	Description	Area (ha)	Proportion of Site (%)
1	Excellent	18	2
2	Very good	276	33
3a	Good	161	19
3b	Moderate	324	39
4	Poor	20	2

Grade	Description	Area (ha)	Proportion of Site (%)
5	Very poor	0	0
NA	Non-agricultural (on ALC plan) and woodland (not on ALC plan)	13	2
NS	Not surveyed and roads	27	3
Total		839	100

14.6.37 As identified within **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]**, the Site is farmed by a number of different businesses, partly in-hand (i.e. farmed by the owners) and partly on various tenancy arrangements. The majority of the land is used for arable cropping. This includes combinable crops such as wheat, barley, oilseed rape and arable break crops, as well as rye and vining peas. Part of the Site is let most years to different specialist growers who grow root crops (potatoes, carrots, parsnips) or onions. Parts of the Site are used for agri-environmental farming uses.

14.6.38 In addition, **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture** [APP/6.2] identifies that the western side of the Site is farmed in-hand. When vegetables are grown, they are grown on a licence arrangement. Within the Site are four areas of outdoor livestock production, which are tenanted to the livestock farmers. Additionally, there are three fields used for rearing outdoor pigs. The rearing areas rotate around part of the farm, and are located on the driest and most free-draining sandy soils.

14.6.39 Breckland (6%) and KLWN (6%) have a higher proportion of employment in the agriculture sector compared to the sub-regional (4%), regional (2%) and national average (1%) (Ref 14-5). This shows that the Local Authorities are more dependent on agricultural output, compared to national level.

Future Baseline

14.6.40 There is no available data to forecast future changes in land uses, therefore it is assumed that the future baseline remains unchanged from the existing baseline. To take a precautionary, worst-case approach, this assessment does not consider a future baseline for land use. Instead, sensitivity is assessed against the existing baseline. This ensures that the assessment represents a worst-case scenario.

Sensitivity

14.6.41 The existing land is primarily used for arable cropping and animal grazing. In terms of employment, the local authority districts are more reliant on agriculture, as it accounts for 6% of total employment. Farm businesses are generally viewed as more resilient to

change. Therefore, the sensitivity of residents, workers, and businesses to changes in land uses is judged to be medium.

Changes in Commuting Patterns (Construction and Decommissioning Phase)

Existing Baseline

14.6.42 Residents of the Combined Local Authorities live in a rural setting which relies heavily on private vehicles and existing transport links. This reliance emphasises the importance of considering how changes in transport can impact individuals and businesses.

14.6.43 The Combined Local Authorities and the broader sub-region are predominantly rural areas, leading to a relatively higher reliance on cars and other private vehicles for transportation. In the Combined Local Authorities , 60% of residents drive a car or van to work, this is significantly higher than regional (48%) and national levels (45%) (Ref 14-32).

14.6.44 As such, disruptions to private transport networks could negatively impact businesses, whose customers may face difficulties reaching them, and workers, who may face greater difficulties reaching their workplace.

14.6.45 Swaffham is serviced by the A47 from west to east, and the A1065 from north to south. As such, it has a high-capacity road network providing access in and out of the town. ES **Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]** identifies that there are three routes to access the Site from the strategic road network, they are:

- Route A: Access to/from the south from the A47, via the A1065
- Route B: Access to/from the north via A1065
- Route C: Access to/from the A47, from the west via Narford Road, Low Road, South Acre Road and A1065

14.6.46 **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]** also identifies the walking and cycling network. There are a limited provisions of footways alongside the carriageways of the roads within the Study Area. There is no footway along the A1065 where it passes along the Site's eastern boundary. In addition, there are no designated sections of the National Cycle Network within the Transport and Access Study Area, though there are some recreational cycle routes that include Peddars Way and Rebellion Way.

Future Baseline

14.6.47 There is no available data to forecast future changes in commuting patterns, therefore it is assumed that the future baseline remains unchanged from the existing baseline. To take a precautionary, worst-case approach, this assessment does not consider a future baseline for commuting patterns. Instead, sensitivity is assessed against the existing baseline. This ensures that the assessment represents a worst-case scenario.

Sensitivity

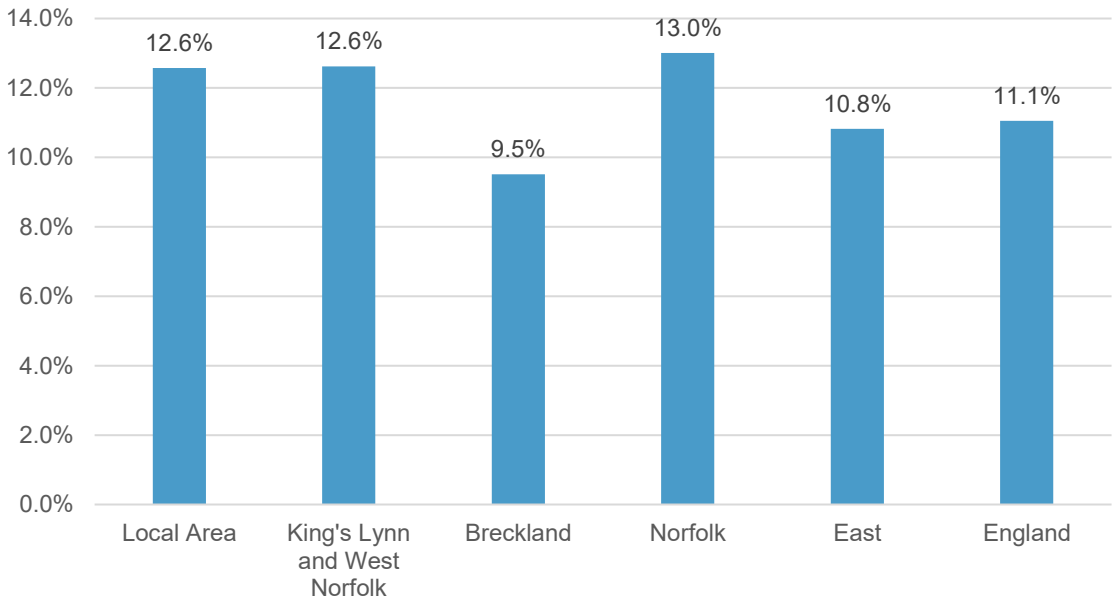
14.6.48 The Site is located within a rural area and hence there are limited routes around the Site. From a socio-economic perspective, the limited availability of alternative routes suggests that residents, workers, and businesses may have a reduced ability to adapt to changes in commuting patterns. However, some flexibility remains through existing routes and available transport options. Therefore, the sensitivity of residents, workers, and businesses to changes in commuting patterns is judged to be medium.

Changes to Local Tourism Assets (Operational Phase)

Existing Baseline

14.6.49 Although local tourism assets are assessed at the ZTV level, data is not available on this scale. Therefore, the defined Local Area is used to establish the baseline for the tourism industry. However, when assessing tourism assets, only those within the ZTV will be considered. Tourism is a key economic contributor in the Local Area, with tourism-related employment making up a similar share of total employment as in KLWN and a higher share than in Breckland. The proportion is also higher than the regional (10.0%) and national (9.5%) average.

Figure 14.4 Tourism Employment as a Proportion of Total Employment (2023)



OBJ

(Source: ONS, 2024. BRES)

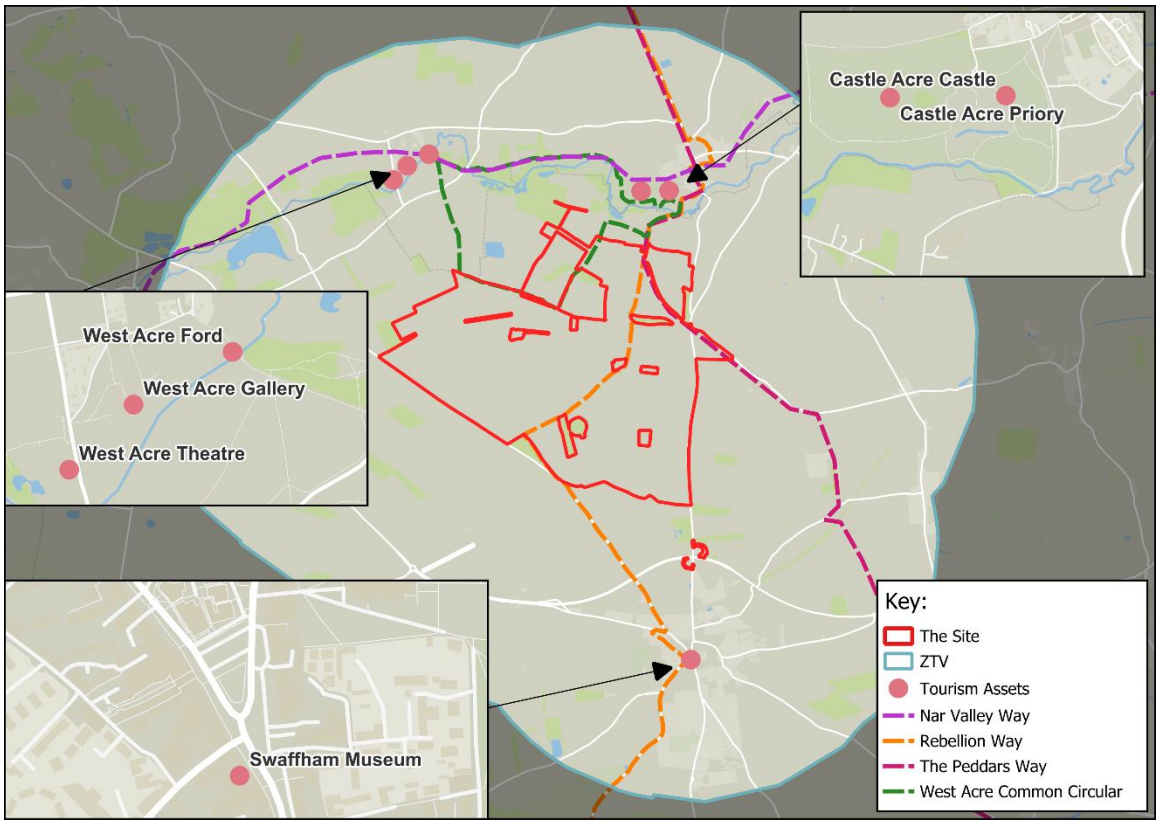
14.6.50 Similarly, for Gross Value Added (GVA), tourism accounts for 11.8% of Breckland's and 11.4% of KLWN total GVA (Ref 14-33). Note that data is not available at the Local Area level. Both Breckland and KLWN have a higher percentage than the regional (10.0%) and national level (9.5%), highlighting the sector's important role in the economy (Ref 14-33).

14.6.51 Breckland and KLWN rank in the top 41% and 15%, respectively, for total visits among England's 325 local authorities (Ref 14-34). While data is only available at the local authority level for 2019, the most recent 2024 data shows that Norfolk is the 12th most visited county in England out of 47. As stated in Breckland's Local Plan, tourism is an important contributor to the local economy (Ref 14-35). The Local Plan identifies the challenge is to enable and manage sustainable tourism, which will safeguard the countryside, heritage and culture for future generations while providing benefits to the local economy (Ref 14-34).

14.6.52 The ZTV features a diverse range of tourism assets from cultural to natural attractions. The ZTV is anchored by Swaffham Museum which attracted 2,000 visitors in 2023 and 2024. Castle Acre priory is also a popular tourist attraction within the ZTV, with Visit Britain estimating 16,200 visitors in 2023 and 15,700 in 2023. The area ranks in the 58th percentile for tourism visitors according to Visit Britain data, indicating that while tourism activity is moderate compared to other locations, it remains an important contributor to the local economy (Ref 14-34). In addition, the ZTV contains the West Acre cluster which includes a theatre, gallery and ford.

14.6.53 These attractions are supplemented by the range of major walking and cycling routes that pass through, or nearby to, the Site. These routes include Peddars Way and Nar Valley Way, major walking routes that stretch from north to south and east to west across Norfolk respectively. Figure 14.5 shows the location of these tourism assets in relation to the Site.

Figure 14.5 Tourism Assets within the ZTV



(Source: © MapTiler © OpenStreetMap contributors)

14.6.54 The baseline recreational resources within the study area include a network of local restricted byways and footpaths, the Nar Valley Way long-distance trail, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path National Trail, and the Castle Acre Circular Walk. The Rebellion Way Cycle Route, a 230 mile strategic cycle route in North Norfolk popular with cycle tourists, intersects the Site. The ZTV also contains six tourist attractions.

14.6.55 Overall, in line with **ES Appendix 6.8: Amenity and Recreation Assessment [APP/6.4]**, only those assets with the potential for significant effects have been scoped into the assessment. These comprise the Nar Valley Way, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path National Trail, the Castle Acre Circular Walk, the Rebellion Way Cycle Route, Castle Acre Priory, and Castle Acre Castle & Bailey Gate. Other resources, such as Swaffham Museum, have been scoped out as they are not expected to be significantly affected by the Scheme.

Future Baseline

14.6.56 There is no available data to forecast future changes in commuting patterns, therefore it is assumed that the future baseline remains unchanged from the existing baseline. To take a precautionary, worst-case approach, this assessment does not consider a future baseline for commuting patterns. Instead, sensitivity is assessed against the existing baseline. This ensures that the assessment represents a worst-case scenario.

Sensitivity

14.6.57 Tourism and recreation, as in the rest of England, are important sources of employment within Norfolk and the Local Area. The baseline includes a network of walking routes such as local restricted byways and footpaths, the Nar Valley Way, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path National Trail, and the Castle Acre Circular Walk, as well as six tourist attractions. In line with **ES Appendix 6.8: Amenity and Recreation Assessment [APP/6.4]**, only those assets with the potential for significant effects have been scoped into the assessment. These comprise the Nar Valley Way, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path National Trail, the Castle Acre Circular Walk, Castle Acre Priory, and Castle Acre Castle & Bailey Gate. The remaining attractions and routes are smaller in scale or located such that they are unlikely to be significantly affected and have therefore been scoped out. While Castle Acre Priory attracts steady visitor numbers, overall, the tourism and recreation activity within the ZTV is modest. On this basis, the sensitivity of residents and businesses to changes in local tourism and recreation assets is assessed as medium.

14.7 Embedded Mitigation

14.7.1 Likely environmental effects have been or will be avoided, minimised, mitigated or reduced through design measures and/or management of the Scheme, as outlined in this section. Proposed environmental enhancements are also described where relevant.

14.7.2 The following embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Scheme's design.

Embedded Construction Phase Mitigation

14.7.3 The following embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Scheme's design for the construction phase:

- Construction works which create dust will be kept to a minimum within proximity to existing pedestrian routes and residential properties, and dust prevention measures, such as damping, will be undertaken to reduce the impact on users of the PRoW network (as will be secured within the **outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP/7.6]** submitted as a requirement of the DCO Application)
- Retention of the existing landscape fabric within and around the boundaries of the Site, namely mature hedgerows and tree cover which contribute to the landscape character of the local context. These landscape features serve to restrict, filter and enclose visibility within the Site and study area south of Bartholomews Hills Plantation
- During the construction phase, the Applicant will implement employment and skills measures designed to maximise local benefits from the Scheme. These will include the creation of apprenticeship and trainee opportunities, targeted engagement with local education providers and STEM organisations, and collaboration with council initiatives such as the Boost Programme, Careers Hub, and Breckland Skills Assembly. The Applicant will seek to source services from local contractors and sub-contractors where feasible, advertise jobs through local channels, and deliver skills workshops for residents. These measures will be coordinated with Breckland Council and other local partners as set out in the **outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy (oESSCS) [APP/7.15]**. Finalisation and implementation of the detailed Employment, Skills, and Supply Chain Strategy (ESSCS) will thereafter be drafted substantially in accordance with the agreed oESSCS and will be subject to approval from BC as the relevant discharging authority in consultation with NCC and the Borough Council of KLWN

Embedded Operational Phase Mitigation

14.7.4 The following embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Scheme's design for the operational phase:

- Offset and buffering of the Scheme with new hedgerow and tree planting to mitigate potential views from the existing residential dwellings within close proximity to the Site (as will be secured within the **outline Landscape and Environmental Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP/7.11]** submitted as a requirement of the DCO Application)
- Recreational enhancements such as interpretation boards and the potential for new publicly accessible amenity space within the north-western site area, that is connected to the existing PRoW network. In addition to this, a number of new permissive routes are proposed, of approximately 4.7km in total, which would link to the existing PRoW

network within the study area to provide recreational benefits. This total number can be broken down to approximately 1.2km new offsite permissive route provision and approximately 3.5km new onsite permissive route provision (as will be secured within the **outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP/7.8]** submitted as a requirement of the DCO Application)

- Internal access routes will be provided within the Site to minimise vehicles needing to use the Local Road Network (LRN) where possible. The details of this will be secured through the detailed design of the Scheme (as will be secured within the **oOEMP [APP/7.8]** submitted as a requirement of the DCO Application)
- During the operational phase, the Applicant will embed initiatives to sustain long-term skills development and community benefits. This will include offering site tours for schools and colleges, delivering educational outreach on solar energy, and supporting summer internship and research programmes. The Applicant will also explore sponsoring local students and running green energy awareness campaigns to raise understanding of the sector. These measures will be coordinated with Breckland Council and other local partners as set out in the outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy (oESSCS). Finalisation and implementation of the ESSCS will thereafter be drafted substantially in accordance with the agreed oESSCS and will be subject to approval from Breckland Council as the relevant discharging authority in consultation with NCC and the Borough Council of KLWN

Embedded Decommissioning Phase Mitigation

14.7.5 The following embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Scheme design for the decommissioning phase:

- Decommissioning works which create dust will be kept to a minimum within proximity to existing pedestrian routes and residential properties, and dust prevention measures, such as damping, will be undertaken to reduce the impact on users of the PRoW network (as will be secured within the **outline Decommissioning Strategy (oDS) [APP/7.10]**

14.8 Assessment of Likely Effects

14.8.1 This section of the Socio-economic chapter identifies and characterises potential impacts arising during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme.

14.8.2 Taking into account the embedded mitigation measures as detailed in section 14.7, the potential for the likely effects of the Scheme on Socio-Economics receptors was assessed using the methodology as detailed in section 14.5 of this chapter. In the sections below, effects during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme are assessed for socio-economic receptors scoped into the ES chapter.

14.8.3 Any additional mitigation required to reduce these effects is then set out in section 14.9. Thereafter, an assessment is made of the significance of any residual effects after all mitigation measures have been accounted for.

Construction Phase

Employment

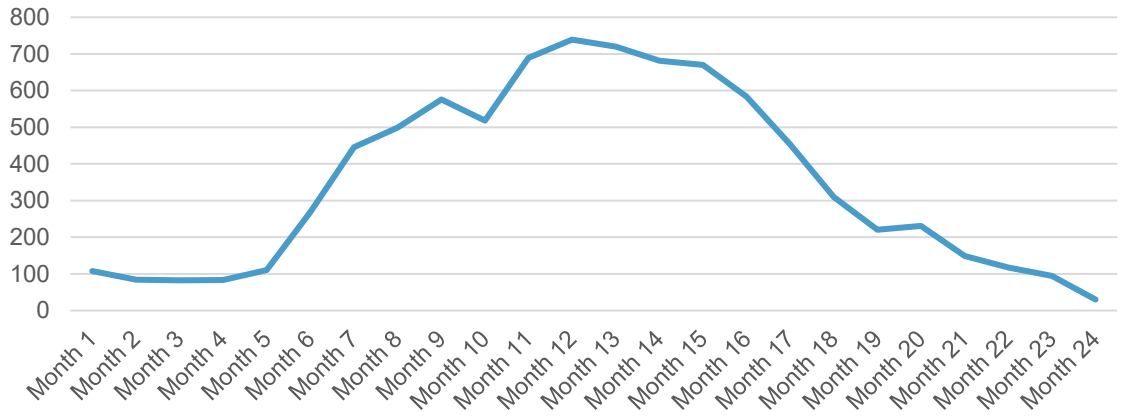
14.8.4 Due to the Scheme's nationally significant scale, it will create direct, indirect, induced, and local jobs during the construction phase.

- Direct jobs are those supported by Scheme activities on the Site
- Indirect jobs are those supported by the Scheme's supply chain
- Induced jobs are those supported by expenditure in the relevant area created by the Scheme's workers
- Local jobs are those supported by residents within the LCA

Direct jobs

14.8.5 The Applicant estimates that the construction phase would support an indicative peak of approximately 740 construction jobs. In total, the construction phase would support approximately 1,245 construction jobs. Figure 14.6 shows the total construction workforce required on-site by month. It indicates that few workers would be on-site at the start of the construction phase, with construction workforce demand peaking during the middle period before declining toward the end of the construction phase. See Table 14.11 for a detailed breakdown of the types of jobs and skills required during the construction phase.

Figure 14.6 Indicative Direct Jobs in the Construction Phase



14.8.6 The peak construction workforce of 740 represents 2% of the workplace-based LCA construction workforce (36,600) and 1% of the resident-based LCA construction workforce (62,700).

14.8.7 To consider the net direct impact, displacement must be considered. Displacement measures the extent to which jobs supported are offset by reductions in employment elsewhere in the LCA. The construction workforce is highly mobile, moving to where there is work or between construction projects, as demand requires. The CITB highlights that there is a need for over 19,750 extra construction workers required in the East of England between 2024 and 2028 to meet extra demand (Ref 14-36). Furthermore, a report by

Turner and Townsend states that all UK regions are suffering from a shortage of green collar construction worker leading to a competition for workers (Ref 14-37). The Local Growth Plan: Norfolk Economic Strategy 2024-2029 highlights challenges in the construction labour market due to a lack of core skills in the sector, particularly for green technology adaptation (Ref 14-38). Given this, a medium level of displacement is applied, defined as 50% in the HCA Additionality Guide (Ref 14-39).

14.8.8 Applying a displacement rate of 50%, it is estimated that there will be approximately 625 net direct jobs created during the construction phase.

Indirect and Induced Jobs

14.8.9 The indirect and induced impact of the construction workers to other sectors is generated through supply chain (indirect) and worker expenditure (induced). A multiplier is used to capture this economic activity associated with additional local income and local supplier purchases. The scale of multiplier effects varies by intervention, industry and geography. The HCA Additionality Guide considers multiplier effects by industry, from estimates produced by Oxford Economics. However, these are at a national level, whilst the analysis here focuses on the indirect and induced impacts at the LCA level (Ref 14-39).

14.8.10 To calculate the regional construction multiplier, a ready reckoner medium multiplier of 1.5 at the regional level is taken from the HCA Additionality Guide. This is then adjusted by the difference between the national construction multiplier (2.7) and the all-industry average multiplier (2.2), resulting in an uplifted regional construction multiplier of 1.8. The construction industry relies heavily on its supply chain compared to other industries, leading to a higher-than-average indirect impact. Using a multiplier of 1.8 is therefore reasonable to account for the significant impact of the construction supply chain.

14.8.11 Based on the total of approximately 625 net direct jobs supported over the construction phase, and applying the uplifted regional construction multiplier (1.84), the total employment impact is expected to be approximately 1,145 net additional jobs. This total comprises approximately 525 net indirect and induced jobs generated through supply chain activity and wider expenditure effects during the construction phase (Note: These figures may not sum due to rounding).

Net Additional Jobs

14.8.12 Taking the net direct and net indirect and induced jobs together, the Scheme is expected to support 1,145 net additional jobs during the construction phase, with between 285 and 575 of these being taken by LCA residents.

Local Jobs

14.8.13 There will be employment opportunities for local residents within the LCA during the construction phase. However, it is expected that a number of jobs will be taken by people living outside the LCA. The range of jobs required outside the LCA would include specialised solar PV professions (Ref 14-40). The construction workforce of major projects

is also highly mobile, indicating that a proportion of workers will move towards where the current work is (Ref 14-16).

14.8.14 For the purposes of the ES, a conservative leakage of 50%-75% outside of the LCA, which would capture the range of considerations presented above. Accounting for this leakage factor, the Scheme is estimated to support approximately 155-310 net direct jobs per annum for residents in the LCA over the construction phase. This is equivalent to a 0.2%-0.5% uplift on the existing baseline positions for residents in construction jobs in the LCA.

Conclusion

14.8.15 Overall, the Scheme is considered to have a low magnitude of impact in relation to construction phase jobs for residents, workers and businesses, as there is only estimated to be an uplift of 2.0% on existing LCA residents working in construction with respect to approximate gross direct jobs. On a medium sensitivity receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Minor Beneficial effect that is considered **not significant** during the construction phase.

Provision of Education, Skills, Training, and Supply Chain

14.8.16 The construction phase of the Scheme will provide opportunities for upskilling and training. The Applicant will appoint an Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor to manage the construction of the Scheme, however at this stage no EPC has been procured. The EPC will be in control of hiring workers, including deciding on the total size of the workforce required, and how many local residents are hired for roles during construction of the Scheme. For the purposes of this assessment, the Applicant has provided an estimated skills overview of direct jobs opportunities during construction at this early stage (Table 14.11). Further detail on construction-related education, skills, training, and supply chain opportunities will be provided once an EPC contractor has been appointed, and will be set out in the detailed Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy.

Table 14.11 Summary of Jobs and Skill Requirements

Job Name	Job Description	Skills
Civil Engineering Workers	Preparation of the Solar PV Site. 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 Solar	Use of machinery, such as dump trucks, diggers and compactors. Use of cranes to lift the components into position.

Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	PV Site and for access onto and away from the Solar PV Site • The digging of trenches • Preparation for and laying foundations for the Inverters, onsite substations and BESS	
Labourers	Labour to place cabling and ducting in the trenches and to transport materials as required around the Solar PV Site.	No specific qualifications required.
Building Construction	Labour to build the temporary storage sheds. Labour to build substation control and relay buildings.	Relevant construction qualifications required.
Racking Structure Assembler	Manage a ramming or screw-piling machine to create the solar structure and assemble the associated structure.	Skilled workers required to control the ramming or screw-piling machines. Less skilled workers required to assemble other components of the structures.
Panel Assembler	Individuals to manage the process of mounting the solar modules onto the structures.	Knowledge of electromechanics tools required.
Electrical Engineering and Cabling	Connecting the panels with Inverters, to onsite substations and Transformers and to the network grid.	Skills for cabling and installation of equipment required.
Cable Construction using trenches	Preparation of the Solar PV Site. 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 • Cable installation will follow behind excavation	Skill of using an excavator to remove layers of topsoil to produce trenches.
Cable Construction using horizonal directional drilling	Preparation of the Solar PV Site. Work includes:	Relevant qualifications and accreditations required to operate horizonal directional drilling that includes NVQ Directional Drilling Level 1 and 2.

Job Name	Job Description	Skills
(trenchless cabling technique)	• 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 • The pipe will then be installed	
Security Guards	Protecting the Solar PV Site and Temporary Construction Compounds during the construction process.	Protect the security of the Scheme during construction.
CCTV Workers	Setting up the security system.	Installation of CCTV system and equipment.
Fencing Installation Workers	Installation of the perimeter fencing including any gates for access.	Installation of fencing.
Landscape Installation Workers	Installation of all landscaping such as planting.	Installation of the landscaping works area.
Delivery drivers	Drivers to deliver equipment and supplies to the Solar PV Site.	Appropriate driving license required.

14.8.17 The Scheme will create substantial employment opportunities across a range of different occupation types in construction; however, these will be temporary in nature as the construction phase is only anticipated to take up to 24 months. The Applicant is actively engaging and meeting with BC, the Borough Council of KLWN, and NCC to identify the most effective ways to support education and skills development in the area. The **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy [APP/7.15]** sets out the construction-related education, skills, training, and supply chain opportunities to be provided, including apprenticeships, local employment, partnerships with schools and colleges, and site visits.

14.8.18 The Scheme would also support a range of supply chain opportunities to local businesses. It is expected that the Scheme will use the local supply chain to source some materials and components, create partnerships between suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors, and as such will stimulate economic activity within the LCA.

14.8.19 The procurement of all key equipment, whether by the Applicant or its contractors, will follow standard competitive bidding practices, with final award decisions based on technical compliance, price, and other key onboarding criteria. The equipment required for the key components of the Scheme have been included in Table 14.12.

Table 14.12 Equipment Requirements

Solar PV Site	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
DC combiner boxes	Electrical Cables (LV, MV)	Electrical Cables (MV, HV)
Electrical Cables (LV, MV)	Battery storage enclosures including battery modules	CCTV
PV Modules and Mounting Structures	CCTV	Perimeter and Palisade Fence
CCTV	Perimeter and Palisade Fence	Fibre Chambers
Perimeter Fence		Welfare facilities and control building or container

Conclusion

14.8.20 The Scheme is considered to have a medium magnitude of impact in relation to education, skills and training for residents and businesses. On a high sensitivity receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Major Beneficial effect that is considered **significant** during the construction phase.

Changes in Demand for Temporary Worker Accommodation

14.8.21 As previous, some construction workers will be specialists with highly specialised skills and are likely to be sourced from a range of locations. It is conservatively estimated that 50%-75% of the construction workforce would come from outside of the LCA and therefore, may require temporary accommodation during the construction phase.

14.8.22 At the peak of the construction phase used for assessment (Q2 2032), it is estimated that 740 workers will be onsite. Applying a leakage of 50%-75% suggests that 370-555 construction workers at peak would come from outside of the LCA and seek temporary accommodation. This is a reasonable worst-case scenario given that potential displacement of workers from other construction projects in the LCA is not factored into this calculation.

14.8.23 The baseline data shows that there are an estimated 9,600 available and affordable bed spaces within the LCA (8,700 excluding campsites), and 2,500 within the Combined Local Authorities (2,100 excluding campsites). This indicates that, in a worst-case scenario where all construction workers require temporary accommodation, the Scheme would

require between 7.7% of the remaining available and affordable stock in the LCA, and 29.6% in the Combined Local Authorities. Even with campsites excluded from the analysis, the Scheme would only require 8.5% of the remaining accommodation stock in the LCA and 35.2% of the remaining stock in the Combined Local Authorities. This assessment applies several conservative assumptions regarding the percentage of non-LCA based workers, the area of impact, the occupancy rates of accommodation (peak across the year) and the peak workforce size, and concludes there is sufficient capacity within the temporary accommodation market.

Conclusion

14.8.24 Based on this, the Scheme is expected to have a low magnitude of impact in the reasonable worst-case scenario for residents, and businesses. Given the low sensitivity of the receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant** during the construction phase.

Effect on Land Uses

14.8.25 There are a number of agricultural businesses operating within the Site, including two substantial arable farming enterprises, free-range pig rearing, and sheep grazing. As noted in **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]**, all businesses are full-time and primarily relate to land within the Site, although most also operate on land elsewhere. The enterprises currently occupying the four fields within the ground-mounted PV module areas (Fields 3, 12, 19 and 20) operate on a rotational basis, typically every two to three years, and will have the opportunity to relocate to land outside the Site. While these businesses will experience some disruption and operational change, through a reduction in farmed area or relocation, such impacts are not expected to result in business closure or long-term loss of viability. In addition, parts of the Site are also used on short-term arrangements by vegetable growers, who may need to source alternative land or reduce the scale of operations.

14.8.26 The two main arable farming enterprises comprise one in-hand holding and one operating under a short-term tenancy. Both will experience a change to day-to-day operations as a result of the Scheme. However, **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** concludes that both arable enterprises will have to reduce in scale, but neither will be rendered non-viable. No farm buildings or other key components of the enterprises will be affected.

14.8.27 Overall, **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]**, concludes the effects on agricultural businesses are assessed as minor adverse during the construction phase. This reflects that the Scheme will temporarily alter day-to-day operations and require some adjustment or reduction in scale for affected enterprises, but these effects will be limited, manageable within existing business structures, and will not compromise the ongoing viability of any agricultural holdings.

Conclusion

14.8.28 The Scheme is expected to result in a temporary change to agricultural activity during the construction phase. Some disruption is anticipated, including a reduction in arable production and the need for affected enterprises to adapt, relocate or scale back operations. However, these impacts are of assessed as low magnitude, with no agricultural businesses expected to become unviable. While the Scheme will lead to a reduction in the overall area of land available for cultivation, the affected businesses are expected to continue operating on retained land and other holdings. Given the medium sensitivity of the receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant** during the construction phase.

Changes in Commuting Patterns

14.8.29 **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]** states that no local capacity assessments (which measures the capacity of the local road networks) have been undertaken for the ES as agreed with NCC. However, it confirms that most vehicle trips associated with the Scheme will occur outside of peak network hours (08:00–09:00 and 17:00–18:00), except in emergencies or exceptional circumstances. **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]** concludes that the Scheme would have a local, temporary, medium-term, and Negligible Adverse effect on driver delay, which is **not significant**.

14.8.30 Similarly, regarding pedestrian delay, **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]** finds that during the construction phase, the Scheme will result in less than a 10% increase in annual average daily traffic. This falls within the normal range of daily traffic fluctuations and is therefore considered **not significant**.

Conclusion

14.8.31 The construction phase is unlikely to disrupt commuting patterns in a way that would prevent employees or shoppers from accessing businesses. Therefore, the Scheme's magnitude of impact on changes in commuting patterns is expected to be negligible for residents, workers and businesses. Given the medium sensitivity of receptors, this leads to a direct, temporary, Negligible effect that is considered **not significant** during the construction phase of the Scheme.

Operational Phase

Provision of Education, Skills, Training, and Supply Chain

14.8.32 The Scheme will support limited operational employment opportunities (due to the nature of the development), that consist of operation and maintenance crews (including technical professions such as electrical engineers and performance managers), landscaping, and occasional repair teams. The types of skills required to be supported by these outlined in Table 14.13.

14.8.33 As in the construction phase, the jobs supported would also support long-term skills development for local residents. Many of the skills that will be developed among local residents will support career opportunities across the sector in the future.

Table 14.13 Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

Job Name	Job Description	Skills
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 Solar PV Site and Temporary Construction Compounds.	Protect the security of the Scheme.
Landscape Monitoring and Managers	To deliver watering strategy and monitor and maintain the landscape/ecology areas within the Scheme.	Knowledge and skills in ecology and landscaping.

14.8.34 The Applicant is actively engaging and meeting with BC, the Borough Council of KLWN, and NCC to identify the most effective ways to support education and skills development in the area. The **outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy [APP/7.15]** sets out the construction-related education, skills, training, and supply chain opportunities to be provided, including apprenticeships, local employment, partnerships with schools and colleges, and site visits.

14.8.35 In addition, during the operational phase of the Scheme, there will also be periods of maintenance requiring temporary workers. In particular, the full replacement of Solar PV Panels is anticipated to happen once (after approximately 40 years) over a 12-24 month period. The BESS Units would likely be replaced once every ten years. This activity is expected to generate ongoing employment and supply chain opportunities, ensuring that benefits extend beyond the initial construction stage. During this replacement period, an estimated gross 125 FTE jobs per annum would be supported, with the on-site workforce expected to peak at around 360 workers at any one time. These activities will also create continued opportunities for local skills development and SME participation in the supply chain, particularly in electrical works, logistics, and site services.

Conclusion

14.8.36 Overall, the Scheme is considered to have a low magnitude of impact in relation to education, skills and training for residents, workers and businesses. On a high sensitivity, this leads to a direct, long-term, Moderate Beneficial effect that is considered **significant** during the operational phase of the Scheme.

Effect on Land Uses

14.8.37 There are a number of agricultural businesses operating within the Site, including two substantial arable farming enterprises, free-range pig rearing, and sheep grazing. As noted in **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]**, all businesses are full-time and primarily relate to land within the Site, although most also operate on land elsewhere. All businesses will experience a significant change in day-to-day operations on-site. The majority of the Site is leased to agricultural businesses, with the landowner managing only a small proportion directly.

14.8.38 The two substantial arable farming enterprises comprise one in-hand holding and one operating under a short-term tenancy. Both will experience a significant change to day-to-day operations on-site as a result of the Scheme. However, **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** concludes that neither business is expected to be rendered unviable. There is potential for alternative agricultural activity such as sheep grazing under and around the solar panels, and overall, the quantum of agricultural labour is not expected to change significantly due to the shift from arable production to sheep-based enterprises.

14.8.39 Parts of the Site are also used on short-term arrangements by vegetable growers, who may need to source alternative land or reduce the scale of operations, the effects in **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** are assessed as minor adverse. In addition, the land is grazed by sheep over winter on stubble fields, and this use has the potential to continue and expand during the operational phase.

Conclusion

14.8.40 The Scheme will result in a change to existing agricultural activity during the operational phase, including a reduction in arable production and the need for some businesses to adapt. However, alternative agricultural use, such as sheep grazing and fodder production, can continue under and around the solar panels, and some income losses may be offset by leasing arrangements. No businesses are expected to be rendered unviable, and the overall level of agricultural labour is not expected to materially change. It is anticipated that alternative income through sheep grazing, would help to offset some of the losses experienced by affected businesses. These impacts are considered to be of low magnitude. Given the medium sensitivity of receptors, this leads to a direct, long-term, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant** during the operational phase.

Changes to Local Tourism Assets

14.8.41 **ES Appendix 6.8: Amenity and Recreation Assessment [APP/6.4]** assesses potential effects on amenity and recreation within the ZTV. The assessment includes two tourism assets: Castle Acre Priory and Castle Acre Castle. It also considers several active travel routes within the ZTV, namely the Nar Valley Way, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path National Trail, the Castle Acre Circular Walk, and the Rebellion Way Cycle Route.

14.8.42 At Castle Acre Priory, there are mid-distance views towards the Site, although these are set within a landscape already characterised by woodland, transmission lines, and existing wind turbines. Some adverse effects are anticipated during construction, commissioning, and operation, including noise and changes to visual amenity (glint, glare, partial visibility of infrastructure). The overall impact is assessed as Moderate (**not significant**).

14.8.43 At Castle Acre Castle, visibility towards the Site is limited from the grounds, though longer-distance views from higher areas overlook parts of the Site against a wooded skyline with existing infrastructure. Scheme elements such as PV Panels and BESS would be barely perceptible, though larger northern elements may be partially visible. The impact is also assessed as Moderate (**not significant**).

14.8.44 In both cases, mitigation will be delivered through the retention and enhancement of northern hedgerows and woodland blocks under the **oLEMP [APP/7.11]**, providing improved screening and reducing residual impacts over time.

14.8.45 For the Castle Acre Circular Walk, visibility of the Site is limited to certain sections. During operation, the Scheme would be partially visible, but overall effects on visual amenity are assessed as slight (**not significant**) in the long term, supported by mitigation through hedgerow retention, planting, and management.

14.8.46 For the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path National Trail, which passes close to the north-eastern edge of the Site, users would experience partial views of larger elements such as substations and Grid Connection Infrastructure. Although some effects on visual amenity would remain, existing vegetation and proposed planting will provide screening, reducing the magnitude of change. Operational effects are assessed as Moderate (**not significant**) in the long term.

14.8.47 For the Rebellion Way Cycle Route, which intersects directly through the Site from north to south, cyclists would likely have extensive views of the solar farm, although this could naturally be mitigated as hedgerows grow.

14.8.48 In addition to mitigation planting and offsetting along PRoW, the Scheme also proposes recreational enhancements, including new publicly accessible amenity space in the north-western area of the Site linked to the existing PRoW network. Approximately 4.7 km of new permissive routes will also be delivered (1.2 km offsite and 3.5 km onsite), further extending connectivity and providing additional recreational benefits for local communities.

14.8.49 The extent of large visual effects, where the Scheme would form major alterations to key elements, features, qualities and characteristics of the landscape, would generally be limited to land within the Site boundary. As such, it is unlikely that changes to recreational and visual amenity associated with local tourism assets and PRoWs would materially affect overall tourist visits to the LA. While some users may experience adverse effects due to reduced visual amenity along certain routes, these are offset by beneficial effects arising from proposed improvements to the PRoW network, including enhanced connectivity and the introduction of approximately 4.7 km of new permissive routes. It is difficult to determine precisely how these adverse and beneficial effects balance each

other; however, adopting a conservative approach, the overall effect is concluded to be adverse.

Conclusion

14.8.50 It is expected that the overall impact of the Scheme on local tourism assets residents, and businesses would be low magnitude of impact. On a medium sensitivity receptor, this leads to a direct, long-term, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant** during the operational phase of the Scheme.

Decommissioning Phase

Employment

14.8.51 The decommissioning phase is expected to start in 2093 and is assumed to support a lower number of direct, indirect, induced and local jobs than the construction phase. For the purposes of the ES, it is assumed that a workforce the size of approximately 75%-80% of the construction workforce would be required for the decommissioning phase (555-590 construction jobs at peak).

Conclusion

14.8.52 Overall, the Scheme is considered to have a low magnitude of impact in relation to decommissioning phase jobs for residents, workers and businesses, as there is only estimated to be a minor uplift of between 1.5%-1.6% on existing LCA residents working in construction with respect to approximate gross direct jobs. On a medium sensitivity receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Minor Beneficial effect that is considered **not significant** during the decommissioning phase.

Provision of Education, Skills, Training, and Supply Chain

14.8.53 It is expected that similar types of roles would be required during the decommissioning phase of the Scheme. For the purposes of the ES, it is assumed that a workforce the size of approximately 75%-80% of the construction workforce would be required for the decommissioning phase (and hence the numbers of available education, skills and training opportunities would naturally be lower).

14.8.54 The Scheme will create substantial employment opportunities across a range of different occupation types in decommissioning; however, these will be temporary due to the duration of the decommissioning phase. The decommissioning of the Scheme will support local jobs and provide opportunities for upskilling and training. The types of skills required to be supported during this phase are outlined in Table 14.14.

Table 14.14 Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

Job Name	Job Description	Skills
Civil Engineering Workers	Work includes: • Preparation and build of any access roads, internal to the Solar PV Site and for access onto and away from the Solar PV Site; • The digging of trenches; • Removal of foundations for the solar stations, onsite substations and BESS; and • Earthworks required for site restoration works.	Use of machinery, such as dump trucks, diggers and compactors.
Labourers	Labour to remove cabling and ducting in the trenches and to transport materials as required from the Solar PV Site.	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, Inverters, onsite substations and Transformers.	Skills for cabling and removal of equipment required.
Cable Construction using trenches	Work includes: • Excavation using an appropriately sized tracked excavator; • The removal and storage of topsoil;	Skill of using an excavator to remove layers of topsoil to produce trenches and restore land.

Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	• Cabling and cable ducting and sheathing to be cleared out; and Backfilling of decommissioned trenches.	
Security Guards	Protecting the Solar PV Site and decommissioning compounds during the decommissioning process.	Protect the security of the Solar PV Site and decommissioning compounds during decommissioning.
CCTV Workers	Decommissioning the security system.	Removal of CCTV system and equipment.
Fencing Installation Workers	Installation of any temporary perimeter fencing including any gates for access at worker compounds. Removal of all other fencing and enclosure structures.	Installation of fencing. Removal of all other fencing and enclosure structures.
Waste and Contamination Specialist	Sorting of decommissioned materials for reuse, recycling, or disposal. Containment and restoration of any potential contaminants released during decommissioning activities.	Understanding of reuse and recycling capabilities of decommissioned infrastructure. Training for contaminant containment and restoration measures.
Delivery drivers	Drivers to deliver equipment and supplies to the Solar PV Site. Drivers to remove decommissioned infrastructure.	Appropriate driving license required.

14.8.55 Given the 60-year timescales on this effect, there is far less certainty regarding the extent to which initiatives to support education, skills and training could be achieved.

Conclusion

14.8.56 The Scheme is considered to have a low magnitude of impact on education, skills, and training opportunities for residents, workers and businesses during the decommissioning phase. On a high sensitivity receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Moderate Beneficial effect that is considered **significant** during the decommissioning phase.

Changes in Demand for Temporary Worker Accommodation

14.8.57 Although the decommissioning workforce is expected to be approximately 75%–80% of the size of the construction workforce, the assessment of potential changes in demand for temporary worker accommodation during the decommissioning phase has been based on

the construction phase estimates. This approach ensures a worst-case scenario assessment.

Conclusion

14.8.58 Based on this, the Scheme is expected to have a low magnitude of impact in the reasonable worst-case scenario for residents, and businesses. Given the low sensitivity of the receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant** during the decommissioning phase.

Effect on Land Uses

14.8.59 **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** states that there will be a period of 1-2 years during decommissioning when agricultural activity across the Site will be disrupted. This will be a short-term temporary disruption. The agricultural enterprises that may be operating at the time of decommissioning will be based on sheep production, which will be able to occur on a rotational basis, aligned with the decommissioning phasing. Overall, **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** concludes that the effect will be minor adverse.

Conclusion

14.8.60 The Scheme is expected to have a low magnitude of impact for residents, workers and businesses. The Scheme will result in the loss of some agricultural activity. However, it is anticipated that alternative income and some of the agriculture practices would help to offset some of the losses experienced by affected farmers. Given the medium sensitivity of the receptor, this leads to a direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant** during the decommissioning phase.

Changes in Commuting Patterns

14.8.61 Although the decommissioning workforce is expected to be approximately 75%–80% of the size of the construction workforce, the assessment of potential changes in commuting patterns during the decommissioning phase has been based on the construction phase estimates. This approach ensures a worst-case scenario assessment.

Conclusion

14.8.62 From a socio-economic perspective, the decommissioning phase is unlikely to disrupt commuting patterns in a way that would prevent employees or shoppers from accessing businesses. Therefore, the Scheme's magnitude of impact in committing patterns is expected to be negligible for residents, workers and businesses. Given the medium sensitivity, this leads to a direct, temporary, and Negligible effect that is considered **not significant** during the decommissioning phase of the Scheme.

14.9 Additional Mitigation Measures

Additional Construction, Operational and Decommissioning Phase Mitigation Measures

14.9.1 As no significant adverse effects have been identified above for receptors during any phase of the Scheme, once embedded mitigation is taken into account, no additional mitigation measures for the Scheme are required.

14.10 Residual Effects

14.10.1 As there are no significant adverse effects identified, the effects will remain unchanged as those reported above in the assessment of likely effects.

14.11 Cumulative Effects Assessment

14.11.1 This section presents an assessment of cumulative effects between the Scheme and other existing and/or approved developments.

14.11.2 As set out in **ES Chapter 2: EIA Process and Methodology [APP/6.1]**, a Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) has been undertaken as part of the EIA in accordance with PINS Advice on Cumulative Effects Assessment (September 2024) and has considered two types of cumulative effects.

- In combination effects: the combined effect generated by individual effects on a particular receptor (presented within **ES Chapter 17: In-Combination Effects [APP/6.2]**
- Cumulative effects: effects generated by the Scheme and other planned or approved developments on the same receptor (presented in ES Volume 2, Chapters 6 to 16 **[APP/6.2]**)

In-Combination Effects

14.11.3 In-combination effects occur when receptors are subject to effects under more than one environmental topic. As such, the effects presented in Chapter 6 to 16 (regardless of whether they are classed as significant or not significant) have been reviewed to identify receptors subject to one or more types of effect to ensure that the interrelationship between each of the aspects of the environment likely to be affected by the Scheme has been properly evaluated and considered.

14.11.4 These has been summarised and tabulated to demonstrate where these effects have the potential to occur and is presented in **ES Chapter 17: In-Combination Effects [APP/6.2]**.

Cumulative Effects

14.11.5 Cumulative effects may arise as a result of effects associated with the Scheme combining with effects associated with other developments. The list of developments has been narrowed down to focus on those developments which are most likely to give rise to cumulative effects. A long-list was generated which was then refined following consultation with relevant local planning authorities, this short-list forms the basis of this assessment.

14.11.6 For this assessment, Tier 1 and Tier 2 schemes have been considered in the cumulative effects assessment. Tier 1 schemes comprise existing, approved, or submitted developments that are reasonably certain to proceed, while Tier 2 schemes are projects that are further advanced in the planning process, such as those on the Planning Inspectorate's programme. Tier 3 schemes, which are identified in development plans or other programmes but lack sufficient detail to allow assessment, have been identified but not assessed. (Ref 14-41) Where this assessment relies on other technical chapters, the committed developments are considered within the study areas of those chapters, ensuring consistency with the assessment of the Scheme's direct effects on Socio-Economics.

14.11.7 A blended approach has been undertaken for the cumulative effects assessment, meaning that different methods have been applied depending on the type of effect being assessed. For employment effects, the assessment is considered inherently cumulative for all approved committed developments since impacts are assessed against a future baseline that includes employment projections. These projections inherently reflect the impacts of approved committed developments within the relevant study area.

14.11.8 For other effects, where projections are not available, data is presented on the expected changes as a result of committed developments. The effect of cumulative schemes is therefore considered through a combination of projections and plans for future developments in the future baseline. Effects, where there is a forecast, are considered against this future baseline so a separate assessment of the cumulative effects would constitute double counting.

14.11.9 A short list of cumulative developments/allocations can be found in **ES Appendix 2.4: Cumulative Schemes [APP/6.4].**

Relevant Developments

14.11.10 Those developments which have the potential to result in cumulative effects on Socio-Economics within the associated study area are set out in Table 14.15. The remaining schemes are not considered to have cumulative effects on within the socio-economic Study Area.

Table 14.15 Short List Developments/Allocations relevant to Socio-Economics

Short List No	Planning Ref	Description	Distance from the Scheme
1	EN0110010	High Grove Solar – RWE Renewables UK Solar and Storage Ltd The Scheme comprises the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) generating panels, on-site energy storage facilities, grid connection infrastructure and ancillary works. The Scheme would have a generating capacity of approximately 720MW.	Adjoining with the Order limits
3	EN0110014	East Pye Solar Farm – delivered by a separate subsidiary of Island Green Power (IGP), the parent company of the Applicant. The project comprises the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station and associated development, including a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), ancillary infrastructure, customer substations and Grid Connection Infrastructure (including a new National Grid Substation). The project will have a generating capacity of 500MW.	23km
3	3SO/2024/0002/SCO	Indigo Corporation Limited – Scoping Opinion Request for proposed development of a 400,000 bird broiler farm.	1km
4	3SR/2021/0001/SCO	Private Applicant – Scoping Opinion Request for 8 Poultry Houses with associated admin blocks,	23km

Short List No	Planning Ref	Description	Distance from the Scheme
		feed bins and ancillary development.	
5	3SO/2020/0002/SCO	Amber Real Estate Investments – Scoping Opinion Request for upgrade of existing poultry unit.	24km
6	3SO/2018/0003/SCO	Dignity Funerals Ltd – Scoping Opinion Request for proposed crematorium facility.	23km
7	3SO/2017/0003/SCO	Broadland Poultry – Scoping Opinion Request to demolish 4 poultry sheds & erect 3 replacement sheds, 1 agricultural barn & new vehicular site access.	22km
8	PF/22/2300	Private Applicant – A balanced cut and fill irrigation reservoir (up to 120,000m³), water pumping station, landscaping works and associated buried pipeline(s).	14km
9	22/01648/FM	Wild Ken Hill – Change of use of existing buildings and new buildings to provide visitor centre, café, event and retail space, indoor play building, bike hire service, play facilities, bike tracks, glamping units, car parking, landscaping and off-road path.	23km
10	22/00357/FM	Anglian Water Services Ltd – Hybrid Planning Application for Grantham to Bexwell Pipeline Scheme (95km pipeline and 4km spur, with outline consent for above-ground infrastructure at Elton and Welby Heath).	19km

Short List No	Planning Ref	Description	Distance from the Scheme
11	21/01580/FM	Anglian Water Services Ltd – Hybrid Planning Application for Bexwell to Bury St Edmunds Pipeline Scheme (70km pipeline with above-ground infrastructure at Gazeley, Isleham, Woodditton; outline consent at Bexwell, Kentford, Ladys Green, Rede).	19km
12	21/02302/FM	C/O Landpro Services – Boultbee Brooks (Renewables Hall Farm) Ltd – Proposed development of a ground mounted solar farm and associated infrastructure, access and grid connection cable.	14km
13	21/00262/FM	Norfolk Farm Leisure Limited – Proposed eco-leisure and tourism facility (holiday lodges, clubhouse, spa, boat house, staff accommodation, EV charging, recreational facilities, renewable energy, landscaping, biodiversity enhancements, and highway improvements).	7km
14	22/01650/FM	Wild Ken Hill – Change of use of land for 20 touring caravan pitches, camping, visitor utility building, reception/retail, storage, parking/drop off, landscaping and off-road path.	25km
15	22/01706/FM	J & J Wildflower Properties – Retrospective application for 10 touring caravans, 10 holiday lodges, service block, café, access road and caravan storage.	15km

Short List No	Planning Ref	Description	Distance from the Scheme
16	22/02114/F	Wicken Farming Company Ltd – Construction of a clay lined irrigation reservoir within an arable field, using excavated soils on site to form embankments (no soils removed).	6km
17	24/01689/FM	British Sugar – Creation of a new water storage reservoir in connection with sugar beet processing and animal feed drying technology.	19km
18	23/01826/FM	Newcome-Baker Farms Limited – Erection of two poultry sheds and associated development (feed silos, weigh rooms, extension to dead bird shed, water tank, access road, repositioned landscaped bund).	23km
19	23/02066/FM	Extension of the site to create 28 new all-weather touring caravan pitches, 4 premium pitches, 2 accessible pitches, 12 camping pitches, 15 glamping tents, new reception building, two toilet blocks, manager's accommodation, utilities pod, and internal road improvements.	17km
20	3SO/2024/0002/SCO	Indigo Corporation Limited – Scoping Opinion Request for proposed development of a 400,000 bird broiler farm.	1km
21	EN020027	Norwich to Tilbury - National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) - Onshore elements Proposal to reinforce the 400kV high voltage power network in East Anglia to include a new 400kV	37km

Short List No	Planning Ref	Description	Distance from the Scheme
		connection substation in the Tendring district. This project is at the examination stage.	
22	EN010109	Equinor - Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects Sheringham Extension Project has a maximum installed capacity of 317MW, while Dudgeon Extension Project has a maximum installed capacity of 402MW. Joint export cable system, offshore and onshore, connecting to the national grid transmission network at Norwich Main substation. This project is at the post-decision stage.	28km
23	PL/2025/1516/SCR	Screening Opinion for a Solar PV development Applicant: (Radiance Energy (C/O Agent))	8km
24	PL/2025/1791/SCO/ PL/2025/0980/SCR	Request for a formal Scoping Opinion from the LPA under Part 4 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 – 4no. replacement poultry breeder sheds and ancillary development	10km
25	22/00704/FM	Construction and operation of a solar farm comprising an array of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic ("PV") panels and containerised batteries and associated infrastructure.	22km
26	18/02289/OM	Outline Application: Up to 500 homes with a neighbourhood centre, associated landscaping,	14km

Short List No	Planning Ref	Description	Distance from the Scheme
		parking and supporting infrastructure.	
27	23/02119/CM / 23/02120/CM	Extension to silica sand extraction operations with progressive restoration without compliance with planning conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (restoration plan) and 8 (scheme of working) of decision APP/X2600/W/21/3289252. Proposed extension of Grandcourt Quarry for the extraction of industrial sand with progressive restoration to nature conservation.	10km
28	3PL/2022/1215/F	Low Carbon Solar Park 15 Ltd - Construction and operation of a solar photovoltaic farm with battery storage and associated infrastructure, including inverters, substations, security cameras, fencing, access tracks and landscaping.	1km
29	EN0110048	Longmarsh Green Energy – solar energy, battery energy storage and co-located data centre campus	6.2km

Employment (Construction Phase)

14.11.11 While construction timelines for a number of identified cumulative schemes are uncertain, these developments are considered inherently cumulative, as the future baseline already accounts for construction workforce requirements within the LCA, as detailed in paragraph 14.6.11. Furthermore, they are not expected to require a substantial specialist construction workforce. On this basis, they are not considered to materially affect workforce availability within the study area.

14.11.12 With specific regard to smaller solar farm developments identified within the short list, the Low Carbon Solar Park 15 Ltd scheme (Short List No. 28) is expected to be operational

from 2027/28 and therefore would not temporally overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. It is therefore not considered further in this assessment.

14.11.13 However, two solar farms (Short List Nos. 23 and 25) within 25 km of the Site have unknown construction programmes and limited available information. As a result, there is potential for construction activities to overlap with the Scheme. While these developments may require some specialist workers, their scale is considerably smaller than that of the Scheme and other major developments (53MW and 21MW respectively), and they are therefore unlikely to have a material effect on the construction workforce in the LCA.

14.11.14 While most cumulative schemes have been considered inherently cumulative, High Grove Solar Farm, East Pye Solar Farm, Norwich to Tilbury NGET, Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects, and the Longmarsh Green Energy project have not. This is because these schemes are expected to have a large construction workforce that is not likely to be accounted for in the projections, as the projections are based on typical construction workforce requirements, and therefore would not account for major projects at a localised level. Therefore, for the purposes of this assessment, these projects have been treated separately. Construction of the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme (Short List No. 21) is expected to run from 2027 to 2031. There is potential for overlap with the construction period for the Scheme during the final two quarters of 2031, when the Scheme is expected to commence and the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme is expected to be completed. The Norwich to Tilbury NGET Environmental Statement shows that there would be approximately 400 construction FTEs during Q3 2031, with workforce numbers then declining towards the end of the construction period. The study areas for the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme and the Scheme differ, with four local authorities overlapping.[3] Data on how the construction workforce is distributed along the route is not available. It is therefore assumed that construction employment is evenly distributed geographically, with the share within the local catchment area estimated based on the spatial overlap between the two schemes. On this basis, around 52% of construction employment for the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme is assumed to fall within the overlapping area, equivalent to approximately 210 FTE construction jobs.

14.11.15 The Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects (Short List No. 22) could overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. This depends on whether they are built concurrently or sequentially. If built concurrently, the construction period is expected to be around 24 to 26 months and would likely complete before the Scheme's construction begins. If built sequentially, there would be two construction periods of around 24 months each, which could overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. As the delivery approach is not yet known, an assumption has been adopted that there is no overlap for employment effects, as this represents the worst case for assessing peak job creation. Together, the projects

[3] Note: Local for the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme is defined as coming from within the wider study area defined as the following local authorities (local authorities which overlap with the Scheme LCA are identified in **bold**): **Norwich City Council**; **South Norfolk Council**; **Mid Suffolk District Council**; **West Suffolk Council**; Ipswich Borough Council; Babergh District Council; Tendring District Council; Colchester City Council; Braintree District Council; Chelmsford City Council; Basildon Council; Brentwood Borough Council; and Thurrock Council.

are estimated to support around 1,810 to 2,190 FTE jobs per annum across the UK. At the East Anglia study area level, this equates to approximately 60 to 450 FTE jobs per annum, with higher employment levels where ports are located within East Anglia.

14.11.16 The construction of the two major solar farm schemes (High Grove Solar and East Pye Solar Farm) are also unlikely to overlap with the construction period of the Scheme and are therefore not expected to affect the availability of the construction workforce. The PEIR socio-economic chapter for High Grove Solar estimated an average workforce of around 265, with a peak of up to 350 during limited peak periods. Similarly, the PEIR socio-economic chapter for the East Pye Solar project estimated an average of 258 workers, with a peak of up to 695 during limited peak periods.

14.11.17 The Longmarsh Green Energy project also has the potential to overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. Based on the indicative programme available for that project, construction of the solar element is anticipated between 2029 and 2032, while construction of the data centre is anticipated between 2029 and 2039, with its first phase completed by 2032. It is indicated that the construction phase could support thousands of construction jobs; however, the published employment information does not provide a corresponding peak FTE estimate or identify the proportion of employment expected within the LCA. Consequently, there is insufficient information to derive a robust estimate of its contribution to cumulative peak construction employment. The Longmarsh Green Energy project has therefore been considered qualitatively, but no additional employment allowance has been included in the quantified assessment. This represents a conservative approach to assessing beneficial employment effects, as it avoids attributing additional job creation that cannot currently be reliably quantified.

14.11.18 High Grove Solar Farm, East Pye Solar Farm, and the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects are not expected to overlap with the Scheme's construction phase and are therefore not considered to contribute to cumulative construction employment effects. The Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme is expected to partially overlap and has been included. On this basis, quantified cumulative construction employment is estimated at approximately 950 FTE jobs at peak (comprising 740 FTE jobs for the Scheme and around 210 FTE jobs from the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme within the overlapping study area). This represents around 3% of the workplace-based construction workforce within the LCA (36,600), an increase of less than one percentage point compared to the Scheme in isolation. This scale of change is considered to be low in magnitude. Given the medium sensitivity of the receptor, the cumulative effect is therefore assessed as direct, temporary, Minor Beneficial effect that is considered **not significant**.

Provision of Education, Skills, Training and Supply Chain (Construction, Operation, and Decommissioning)

14.11.19 Similar to construction and decommissioning jobs, many of the committed developments are considered inherently cumulative in terms of employment and skills provision. This is because the future baseline accounts for the employment and skills requirements within the LCA, reflecting the impacts of approved schemes.

14.11.20 High Grove Solar Farm and East Pye Solar Farm are the only developments within the Study Area that could have a material impact on employment and skills provision. However, the scale of their commitments is not yet known. High Grove Solar Farm is expected to deliver an oESSCS, and it is confirmed that East Pye Solar Farm will also deliver an oESSCS alongside its DCO application, following a similar approach to this Scheme. The Applicant, a subsidiary of IGP, will work with other projects in the area to ensure that employment, skills, and supply chain initiatives are aligned and coordinated where possible. This includes collaboration with East Pye Solar Farm, which is also being brought forward by a separate IGP subsidiary, as well as with High Grove Solar Farm where opportunities for coordination exist.

14.11.21 The Longmarsh Green Energy project could also contribute to education, skills, training and supply chain provision. However, insufficient information is currently available regarding any associated commitments or initiatives to assess its contribution reliably. No additional provision has therefore been assumed, representing a conservative approach to assessing beneficial effects. The cumulative effect conclusions remain unchanged.

14.11.22 While the timing of construction and delivery of employment and skills initiatives may not coincide directly with the Scheme, it is confirmed that East Pye Solar Farm will deliver similar initiatives during its construction and decommissioning phases. It is also reasonable to assume that High Grove Solar Farm will bring forward comparable initiatives as part of its development. Taken cumulatively, the additional provision is considered to be high in magnitude of impact. Given the high sensitivity of the receptor, the cumulative effect is therefore assessed as direct, temporary, Major Beneficial effect that is considered **significant**.

14.11.23 Based on the assumption that High Grove Solar Farm and East Pye Solar Farm will be delivering similar employment and skills initiatives during the operational phase, the cumulative impact is considered to be low in magnitude of impact. Given the high sensitivity of the receptor the cumulative effect is therefore assessed as direct, temporary, Moderate Beneficial effect that is considered **significant**.

Changes in demand for temporary workers' accommodation (Construction, and Decommissioning)

14.11.24 Most identified cumulative schemes are not expected to require a substantial specialist workforce and are therefore unlikely to generate notable demand for temporary accommodation.

14.11.25 With specific regard to solar farm developments identified within the short list, the Low Carbon Solar Park 15 Ltd (Short List No. 28) is expected to be operational from 2027/28 and would not temporally overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. It is therefore not considered further in this assessment.

14.11.26 The two solar farms (Short List Nos. 23 and 25) may require some specialist workers, although detailed information is not available. However, their scale is considerably smaller than that of the Scheme and other major developments (53MW and 21MW respectively).

On this basis, they are unlikely to have an impact on demand for temporary accommodation.

14.11.27 Of the larger committed developments, there are only three schemes that could potentially overlap with the Scheme's construction phase.[4]

14.11.28 As set out above, the construction phase for the Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme is expected to run from 2027 to 2031 and has potential to overlap during the last two quarters of 2031. The Environmental Statement for that project indicates that around 90% of the construction workforce would require temporary accommodation. On this basis, and assuming that construction employment is evenly distributed geographically, the share within the local catchment area is estimated based on the spatial overlap between the two schemes. Around 52% of construction employment is therefore assumed to fall within the overlapping area, equivalent to approximately 185 FTE construction jobs that may generate demand for temporary accommodation within the LCA.[5]

14.11.29 In addition, the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects could overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. This depends on whether they are built concurrently or sequentially. If the projects are built sequentially, there would be two construction periods of around 24 months each, which would overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. As the delivery approach is not yet known, a worst case assumption of sequential construction has been adopted for this effect. As detailed in the Environmental Statement for the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects, under this scenario, construction employment is estimated at up to around 1,270 FTE jobs per annum nationally. At the East Anglia level, this equates to up to around 260 FTE jobs per annum where construction ports are located within the study area (and lower where ports are located elsewhere in the UK).

14.11.30 The Longmarsh Green Energy project also has the potential to overlap with the Scheme's construction phase. Based on the indicative programme information provided in the EIA Scoping Report for that project, construction of its solar element is anticipated between 2029 and 2032, while construction of the data centre is anticipated between 2029 and 2039, with its first phase completed by 2032. Given the Scheme's anticipated commencement in Q4 2031, overlap with the main solar construction works for the Longmarsh Green Energy project is expected to be limited. The principal potential for overlap is therefore associated with the subsequent phases of data-centre construction. In the absence of a published construction workforce profile for the Longmarsh Green Energy project, a construction workforce estimate has been developed using a similar data-centre scheme as a proxy. The proposed CX Technology Campus at Chapelcross, with approximately 1GW of potential data-centre capacity, comparable to the approximately 1GW proposed as part of the Longmarsh Green Energy project, is expected

[4] High Grove Solar Farm and East Pye Solar Farm have not been considered as they are not expected to overlap with the Scheme's construction phase.

[5] An alternative weighting based on the distribution of existing hotel stock was tested, producing a lower estimate of 41%. As a result, and for testing worst case scenarios, the 52% has been retained.

to support up to 750 construction jobs over an approximately eight-year phased programme. A workforce of 750 workers has therefore been adopted for the purposes of this assessment. As published information does not confirm whether the Chapelcross figure represents a peak concurrent workforce, it is used as an indicative benchmark rather than a confirmed peak workforce estimate for the Longmarsh Green Energy project, which is considered to be a reasonable assumption based on the level of information currently available for the Longmarsh Green Energy project. To test accommodation capacity on a conservative basis, all 750 workers are assumed to require temporary accommodation concurrently, generating demand for 750 bedspaces.

14.11.31 In total, this would result in a peak of approximately 1,935 construction workers (including 740 from the Scheme) requiring temporary accommodation within the LCA. Therefore, there is sufficient capacity within the LCA to accommodate this demand (with around 9,600 available and affordable bedspaces). Within the Combined Local Authorities Study Area, a scenario in which all 750 workers assumed for the Longmarsh Green Energy project seek accommodation alongside the Scheme's 740 workers would result in demand for approximately 1,490 bedspaces. This would be within the identified capacity of approximately 2,500 available and affordable bedspaces, leaving approximately 1,010 bedspaces available.

14.11.32 This assessment does not take account of the two smaller solar schemes (Short List Nos. 23 and 25) within these authorities, for which limited information is available. However, given their smaller scale, any demand for temporary accommodation is likely to be modest and capable of being absorbed within existing capacity.

14.11.33 In addition, four schemes are expected to increase tourism accommodation within the LCA.

- Norfolk Farm Leisure Limited (21/00262/FM) – Holiday lodges (number not specified)
- Wild Ken Hill (22/01650/FM) – 20 touring caravan pitches (plus camping areas, but no fixed number stated)
- J & J Wildflower Properties (22/01706/FM) – 10 additional touring caravans and 10 holiday lodges
- Extension of existing site (23/02066/FM) – 28 new all-weather touring caravan pitches, 4 premium pitches, 2 accessible pitches, 12 camping pitches, 15 glamping safari tents, plus reception enlargement/refurbishment, two new toilet blocks, manager's accommodation, utilities pod, and access improvements

14.11.34 The anticipated operational dates of these schemes are not yet known. To adopt a conservative approach, they have not been included within the cumulative schemes assessment, and the existing temporary worker accommodation baseline has been retained.

14.11.35 Overall, the cumulative impact is considered to be medium in magnitude of impact. Given the low sensitivity of the receptor, the cumulative effect is therefore assessed as direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant**.

Effect on land uses

Construction and Decommissioning

14.11.36 **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** concludes that there are minor adverse cumulative effects on agricultural land during the construction, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme.

14.11.37 From a socio-economic perspective, therefore, the cumulative impact is considered to be low in magnitude of impact (the same as assessment) in all phases. Given the medium sensitivity of the receptor, the cumulative effect is assessed as direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant**.

Operation

14.11.38 The cumulative developments relevant to agricultural land use were identified through the process set out in **ES Appendix 2.4: Cumulative Schemes [REP3-063]** and are considered within **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]**. Four developments are considered: High Grove Solar Farm, East Pye Solar, and Norwich to Tilbury NGET, and the Longmarsh Green Energy project. The assessment identifies High Grove Solar Farm and East Pye Solar, and the Longmarsh Green Energy project as the principal developments relevant to the potential combined change in agricultural land use and loss of agricultural land. The Norwich to Tilbury NGET scheme is anticipated to result in only limited agricultural land loss. Therefore, the assessment below draws on the two solar farm schemes to consider the potential cumulative implications for agricultural business operations.

14.11.39 During operation, the Scheme, together with High Grove Solar Farm, East Pye Solar, and the Longmarsh Green Energy project, would reduce the area available for conventional arable production. Whilst agricultural activity, including sheep grazing and/or fodder production, may continue on parts of the solar sites, there would be a change in the nature and intensity of agricultural land use.

14.11.40 **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** identifies the potential for the combined permanent loss of BMV agricultural land associated with fixed infrastructure and permanent mitigation areas to fall within the over 50 ha category. On this basis, **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2]** concludes that the permanent loss of BMV agricultural land could result in a major adverse cumulative effect, which would be significant in EIA terms.

14.11.41 From a socio-economic perspective, the principal cumulative effect would relate to the operation and viability of agricultural businesses. High Grove Solar Farm did not assess effects on agricultural businesses separately, on the basis that landowners with farming businesses involved in the development had entered into voluntary agreements and had therefore considered the implications for the overall viability of their businesses. The East Pye Solar assessment identifies that nine full-time farm businesses and agricultural enterprises operate within its Order limits. Whilst the development would reduce the area

of land available to those enterprises for agricultural production, the assessment identifies that the businesses also operate land outside the Order limits and that access to such land would be retained throughout the operation and maintenance phase. It therefore identifies no severance effects, as the development would not prevent farmers from accessing or operating their land outside the Order limits. As the Longmarsh Green Energy project is at an early stage, insufficient information is currently available to fully assess its potential impacts on agricultural businesses or its contribution to cumulative effects. For the purposes of this assessment, a conservative assumption has therefore been made that similar land-use arrangements would apply across all cumulative schemes, resulting in a reduction in the overall area of alternative land available to farmers for agricultural production.

14.11.42 Taking account of the available assessment findings for the Scheme, High Grove Solar Farm and East Pye Solar, together with the conservative assumption applied for the Longmarsh Green Energy project, the cumulative impact on agricultural land uses and businesses is considered to be of medium magnitude. Given the medium sensitivity of the receptor, the cumulative effect is assessed as direct, temporary and Moderate Adverse, which is considered **significant**. This conclusion is subject to the limitations of the information currently available for the Longmarsh Green Energy project and represents a worst-case scenario. Should further information demonstrate that alternative arrangements would retain more land in agricultural use or otherwise reduce effects on agricultural businesses, the magnitude of the cumulative impact could be lower.

Changes in commuting patterns (Construction, and Decommissioning)

14.11.43 As identified in **ES Chapter 9: Transport and Access [APP/6.2]**, all cumulative traffic flows associated with committed schemes are considered to be inherently accounted for within the TEMPro growth factors used in Section 9.4 to generate the 2031 future baseline traffic flow scenario. This is because no dedicated traffic flow data is available within the documentation for the cumulative schemes.

14.11.44 Therefore, the cumulative impact is considered to be negligible in magnitude of impact (the same as assessment). Given the medium sensitivity, the cumulative effect is assessed as direct, temporary, Negligible effect that is considered **not significant**.

Changes to local tourism assets (Operation)

14.11.45 As noted in **ES Appendix 6.8: Amenity and Recreation Assessment [APP/6.4]**, High Grove Solar Farm is the only development considered for cumulative effects due to its scale and location (Note: East Pye Solar Farm is not included in the assessment as it lies outside the defined study area). High Grove Solar Farm has the potential to generative a number of effects on landscape and visual receptors, which includes tourism assets. Effects could occur during operation, potentially affecting the visual amenity of PRoW users. These impacts would be minimised through mitigation measures, including hedgerow retention, new planting, and long-term management.

14.11.46 However, no impacts have been identified with regard to tourism assets within **ES Appendix 6.8: Amenity and Recreation Assessment [APP/6.4]** during the operational phase. Therefore, the cumulative impact is considered to be low in magnitude of impact (the same as assessment). Given the medium sensitivity of the receptor, the cumulative effect is therefore assessed as direct, temporary, Minor Adverse effect that is considered **not significant**.

14.12 Conclusion

14.12.1 This chapter has set out and assessed the likely effects of the Scheme in relation to Socio-Economics. Likely effects have been assessed for the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Scheme. Following the implementation of embedded mitigation as detailed in section 14.7 respectively, no significant adverse effects have been identified. The residual effects therefore, remain as reporting in the assessment of likely effects during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.

14.12.2 Table 14.16 sets out a summary of the Socio-Economic residual environmental effects.

Table 14.16 Summary of residual effects for Socio-Economics

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
Construction Phase								
Jobs	Medium	The Scheme is expected to support 1,145 net additional jobs during the construction phase, with between 285 and 575 of these being taken by LCA residents.	Low	N/A	Direct, temporary, beneficial	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A
Provision of education, skills, training and supply chain	High	The **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy [APP/7.15]** sets out the construction-related	Medium	The Applicant will implement employment, skills, and supply chain measures to maximise local benefits	Direct, temporary, beneficial	None	Major (**Significant**)	The implementation and outcomes of employment and skills initiatives will be monitored and reported in accordance

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		education, skills, training, and supply chain opportunities to be provided, including apprenticeships, local employment, partnerships with schools and colleges, and site visits.		as outlined in the oESSCS **[APP/7.15]**.				with the approach set out in the oESSCS **[APP/7.15]**.
Changes in demand for temporary workers accommodation	Low	In a worst-case scenario where all construction workers require temporary accommodation, the Scheme would require 7.7% of the remaining available and affordable stock in the LCA, and	Low	N/A	Direct, temporary, adverse	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		29.6% in the Combined Local Authorities.						
Effect on land uses	Medium	The Scheme will result in the loss of some agricultural activity. However, it is anticipated that alternative income and some of the agriculture practices, would help to offset some of the losses experienced by affected farmers.	Low	N/A	Direct, temporary, adverse	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A
Changes in commuting patterns	Medium	The construction phase is unlikely to disrupt commuting	Negligible	N/A	Direct, temporary, negligible	None	Negligible (**Not significant**)	N/A

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		patterns in a way that would prevent employees or shoppers from accessing businesses.						
Operational Phase								
Provision of education, skills and training	High	The **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Strategy [APP/7.15]** sets out the construction-related education, skills, training, and supply chain opportunities to be provided, including apprenticeships,	Low	The Applicant will implement employment, skills, and supply chain measures to maximise local benefits as outlined in the oESSCS **[APP/7.15]**.	Direct, long-term, beneficial	None	Moderate (**Significant**)	The implementation and outcomes of employment and skills initiatives will be monitored and reported in accordance with the approach set out in the oESSCS **[APP/7.15]**.

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		local employment, partnerships with schools and colleges, and site visits.						
Effect on land uses	Medium	The Scheme will result in the loss of some agricultural activity. However, it is anticipated that alternative income, would help to offset some of the losses experienced by affected farmers.	Low	N/A	Direct, long-term, adverse	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A
Changes to local tourism assets	Medium	The extent of large visual effects, where the Scheme	Low	New hedgerow and tree planting will	Direct, long-term, adverse	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		would form major alterations to key elements, features, qualities and characteristics of the landscape, would generally be limited to the land within the Site boundary. Based on this, it is unlikely that changes to recreational and visual amenity associated with local tourism assets and PRoWs would affect overall tourist visits to the LA.		be introduced to offset and buffer the Scheme, mitigating views from nearby residential dwellings, in accordance with the **oOEMP [APP/7.8]**. Interpretation boards, new amenity space, and approximately 4.7 km of new permissive routes (1.2 km off-site and 3.5 km on-site) will be provided to enhance				

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
				connectivity and recreational access, as secured in the **oOEMP [APP/7.8]**. Internal access routes will be provided within the Site to reduce reliance on the Local Road Network, secured through the detailed design of the Scheme in the **oOEMP [APP/7.8]**.				

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
Decommissioning Phase								
Jobs	*Medium*	The decommissioning phase is expected to start in 2093 and is assumed to support a lower number of direct, indirect, induced and local jobs than the construction phase. For the purposes of the ES, it is assumed that a workforce the size of approximately 75%-80% of the construction workforce would be required for the	*Low*	N/A	Direct, temporary, beneficial	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		decommissioning phase.						
Provision of education, skills, training and supply chain	*High*	Given the 60-year timescales on this effect, there is far less certainty regarding the extent to which initiatives to support education, skills and training could be achieved.	*Low*	The Applicant will implement employment, skills, and supply chain measures to maximise local benefits as outlined in the oESSCS **[APP/7.15]**.	Direct, temporary, beneficial	None	Moderate (**Significant**)	The implementation and outcomes of employment and skills initiatives will be monitored and reported in accordance with the approach set out in the oESSCS **[APP/7.15]**.
Changes in demand for temporary workers accommodation	*Low*	In a worst-case scenario where all workers require temporary accommodation, the Scheme would require	*Low*	N/A	Direct, temporary, adverse	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		7.7% of the remaining available and affordable stock in the LCA, and 29.6% in the Combined Local Authorities.						
Effect on land uses	*Medium*	The Scheme will result in the loss of some agricultural activity. However, it is anticipated that alternative income and some of the agriculture practices, would help to offset some of the losses experienced by	*Low*	N/A	Direct, temporary, adverse	None	Minor (**Not significant**)	N/A

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Scale and Nature of Effect (with embedded mitigation)	Additional Mitigation	Residual effect (with additional mitigation)	Monitoring Requirement
		affected farmers.						
Changes in commuting patterns	*Medium*	The construction phase is unlikely to disrupt commuting patterns in a way that would prevent employees or shoppers from accessing businesses.	*Negligible*	N/A	Direct, temporary, negligible	None	Negligible (**Not significant**)	N/A

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