

# Heckington Fen Solar Park

EN010123

## Outline Supply Chain, Employment and Skills Plan

Applicant: Ecotricity (Heck Fen Solar) Limited

Document Reference: 7.12

Pursuant to: APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

February 2023



## OUTLINE SUPPLY CHAIN, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN

| Document Properties                    |  |                     |
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| Title                                  | Outline Supply Chain, Employment and Skills Plan     |                     |
| Prepared By                            | Heckington Fen Energy Park Project Team (Ecotricity) |                     |
| Version History                        |  |                     |
| Version                                | Date   | Version Status      |
| Rev 1                                  | February 2023  | Application Version |

This Outline Supply Chain, Employment and Skills Plan (the 'Plan') provides details of the supply chain, employment, training and learning opportunities available during the construction and operation of the Heckington Fen Solar Park.

The development will take approximately 30 months to build. Once complete, the development will provide electricity to the National Grid.

Prior to works commencing on a particular phase of the development a supply chain, employment, and skills plan (which must be substantially in accordance with this 'Plan') should be submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority (or both North Kesteven District Council and Boston Borough Council if applicable). With construction work proposed to begin in spring 2025, a further iteration of this plan is proposed to be submitted to the relevant local authority (or both) before the end of 2024.

The Plan, and its compliance is secured by Requirement 16 of the DCO (document reference 3.1).

The objectives of the Plan are to:

1. Detail the intention to use local labour where commercially viable and available,
2. Where practically feasible, available and cost competitive, procure goods and services, known as the supply chain, from local contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers to support local employment,
3. Detail recruitment and training opportunities involved in the development (construction and operation), and
4. Support the development of skills in the local area.

Socio-economic benefits of the development were identified in the Environmental Statement (document reference 6.1.11), in particular this included additional jobs for the local area, business rates and increase in demand for accommodation.

### **1. Local Labour**

When considering new permanent and temporary positions during the construction and operation of the plant, the Developer will use all reasonable endeavours to provide opportunities for local jobseekers, apprentices and graduates with the relevant skills and experience. Applicable roles will be advertised locally via Jobcentre Plus and PeoplePlus. Local labour may not always be specific to the immediate area (North Kesteven and Boston), so it may be necessary to advertise in Lincolnshire, and the East of England to find the most suitable candidates.

A careers-type event will be held locally in advance of the main construction starting onsite.

Interested parties are advised to contact the Developer to be added to an interested parties list for future consideration:

Email: [heckingtonfensolar@ecotricity.co.uk](mailto:heckingtonfensolar@ecotricity.co.uk),

Call: Freephone 0800 151 0784

Write to us at: FREEPOST ECOTRICITY SOLAR PARK.

Table 1 includes a list of organisations that will be contacted to fulfil the objectives of this Plan:

**Table 1- Public and private sector organisations**

|                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Primary public sector partners   | North Kesteven District Council |
|                                  | Lincolnshire County Council     |
|                                  | Boston Borough Council          |
|                                  | Greater Lincolnshire LEP        |
| Education and training providers | University of Lincoln           |
|                                  | Boston College                  |
|                                  | Grantham College                |
| Business sector groups           | People Plus                     |
|                                  | Jobcentre Plus                  |
|                                  | Astute Recruitment              |

## **2. Supporting Local Services**

Some elements of the build-out will be technology-specific which can only be undertaken by the commissioned technology providers. However, where opportunities exist for local firms to be involved, these will be engaged accordingly, examples include landscaping, fencing, security, plant hire and operators, materials including aggregate and concrete etc.

This will apply during construction predominantly but also during the operational and maintenance phase.

Local services are likely to benefit from other factors, such as increased spend in the area from hospitality and accommodation, already demonstrated during the planning stages with requirements for plant hire, accommodation, food, fuel, hall hire and provision of mobile welfare and security facilities.

Other elements of the supply chain involve manufacturing either in the UK or abroad. This could include steel for the panel mounting structures – for which there are known UK suppliers, or panel manufacturers which are typically based abroad due to the location of raw materials. Fencing, drainage and security is likely to be more commonly provided by local contractors and discussions with local suppliers has already commenced.

## **3. Recruitment and Training Opportunities**

Our experience to date has found that apprentices are already likely to be in placements with firms who offer services similar to those listed above. This project is likely to provide more opportunities for trainees and those looking to get back into work. These roles could be placements lasting a number of weeks within firms supplying goods and services, through to 8-26 week programmes for traineeships or back to work opportunities. The requirement to host these opportunities where practicable will be written into the proposed scope of works for goods and services and considered during the tendering process. Where reasonably possible and commercially viable the aims of the Plan will help local jobseekers find work via a range of paid and unpaid roles and stimulate awareness of careers in construction, green technologies and other sectors related to the development.

Opportunities will be advertised with stakeholders, such as the local planning authorities, Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, job adverts, website vacancies, and notice to local recruitment teams.

Secondary employment may be forthcoming as a consequence of the development for example in the hospitality, accommodation and other supporting industries. A number of operational jobs are also anticipated, for the ongoing maintenance of the site, and sheep grazing.

Practical demonstration of the trial trenching has already taken place on site with students from the Keys Group - Elm Grange School.

## **4. Support the Development of Skills Locally**

The Plan offers an exciting opportunity to work with local firms, employment and training agencies to develop local skills through the awareness of renewable technologies, in particular solar and energy

storage. Delivery partners could include the Elm Grange School, Colleges in Boston and Sleaford, other further education colleges and universities which might be further afield, such as Lincoln and Grantham, Jobcentre Plus and PeoplePlus.

At appropriate times during the construction phase, open-day type events could include school visits and careers information days. The timing of such visits will ensure minimal risk to visitors and staff alike.

**5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring reports are proposed to include a summary of activities completed, including any qualifications gained. These would be provided annually to North Kesteven District Council, Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council, and would be coordinated by the Project Manager.

Table 2 provides a summary of the above opportunities.

**Table 2- Supply chain, employment and skills opportunities** – depending on the phase being commenced, the table below would be amended accordingly, and currently shows examples.

| Supply chain                               | Employment and Skills   | Publicising  |
|--|---|--|
| Landscaping                                | Communicate requirements for supply chain with local providers listed in Table 1.   | Promoting opportunities locally, such as the project's webpage, local news publications, and working with local job centres.           |
| Fencing                                    |   |  |
| Security                                   | Engaging with suppliers already known to the Applicant to highlight and understand gaps in provision of supplies and personnel. | Outreach to local businesses.  |
| Plant hire and operators                   |   |  |
| Materials including aggregate and concrete | Working with providers in Table 1 identify any gaps in the skill base of the local population.                                  | Raise general awareness of the project using local advertisements.   |
| Panel installation                         |   | Maintain dialogue with the parties listed at Table 1 for upcoming opportunities so they can communicate it through their own channels. |
| Site management                            |   |  |