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Environmental Statement Appendix 13.1: Employment and Skills Plan

June 2024



### **EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN**

Helios Renewable Energy Project

4<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Prepared for: Enso Green Holdings D Limited

Prepared by: Stantec Development Economics

#### **EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN**

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## **Table of Contents**

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT PROFILE OF NORTH YORKSHIRE	2
3	LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS GUIDANCE	5
4	EMLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN	7

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### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) has been prepared by the Stantec Development Economics Team on behalf of Enso Green Holdings D Limited (the Applicant) to support the application for the Helios Renewable Energy Project (the Proposed Development).
- 1.2 This ESP will evaluate the employment and skill benefits delivered to the North Yorkshire Council (NYC) area as a result of the Proposed Development. This document establishes the Applicant's commitment to the process of developing a deliverable ESP that enhances local employment and upskilling opportunities throughout the 12 month construction phase and potentially within the future decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development.
- 1.3 The ESP structure is based on guidance provided by the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfC) programme, which is in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB). The guidance is designed to be used for construction procurement and planning to aid the creation of employment and skills interventions, including apprenticeships, work placements, job creation and upskilling opportunities that are relevant and proportionate to the construction activity being undertaken.
- 1.4 Where viable, the Applicant endeavours to use this ESP to facilitate employment and upskilling opportunities throughout all tiers of the Proposed Development's construction and built environment supply chain by supporting opportunities for employment and apprenticeships, and the development of skills. The approach set out within this ESP includes the Applicant's aspirations for employment, skills, and apprenticeship delivery, hereafter described as output opportunities. The ESP sets out the Applicant's aspirations to engage with, and access small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as well as larger contractors and their supply chains.
- 1.5 This ESP will be used to influence and direct contractors, sub-contractors, and suppliers to support local employment and upskilling where commercially viable and available during construction and throughout the supply chain.
- 1.6 The ESP is structured as follows:
  - **Section 2** of the ESP provides a brief summary of the employment profile of NYC in order to set the background context for consideration of the ESP;
  - Section 3 summarises NYC's aspirations, guidance, and corporate strategy towards the
    development of skills and employment opportunities across its administrative area, to
    inform the ESP and ensure it aligns with NYC's aspirations; and
  - Section 4 details the key components of the ESP, presenting the indicative objectives to be actioned by the Applicant, through contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers. Section 4 will set out the Applicant's endeavours to encourage guided input and deliver output that will contribute to employment and upskilling opportunities.

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### 2 Resident Employment Profile of North Yorkshire

- 2.1 This section provides the background economic context for the Proposed Development and considers key socio-economic indicators in respect of the NYC area. Comparisons have been made against data for Yorkshire and The Humber (regional) and England (national). These indicators include the proportion of economically active residents (aged 16 and above), the unemployment rate, and the employment profile by industrial sector. This provides an understanding of the local socio-economic baseline, and the context influencing the ESP strategy (Section 4).
- 2.2 Data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), from the 2021 Census, identifies 296,779 residents aged 16 and above that are economically active (this includes all those people in employment or available to work, for example the unemployed). This is equivalent to 57.5% of all residents aged 16 and over in the NYC area. This is marginally higher than the regional level across Yorkshire and The Humber region (56.2%), but lower than the national average (58.6%)<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.3 The 2021 Census Data<sup>2</sup> records the unemployment rate (among the people aged 16 and over) within the NYC area to be 1.8%, this is below both the regional (2.7%) and national average (2.9%). With an unemployment rate of 1.8%, this equates to 9,279 people unemployed within North Yorkshire.
- According to the ONS, 2021 Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)<sup>3</sup>, there are 272,450 people working in the North Yorkshire area of which 12,250 are working in the construction industry, accounting for 4% of jobs in North Yorkshire, as shown in Table 2.1. This identifies a significant construction workforce local to the Proposed Development. Across the Yorkshire and The Humber Region there are a total of 114,000 residents (5%) working in the construction industry, indicating a sizable available construction labour force at a wider geography.
- 2.5 Table 2.1 also identifies that 12% (33,400 people) of the NYC resident labour force are employed within the manufacturing industry, and 1% (3,535 people) are employed in mining, quarrying and utilities. A further 7% (19,000 people) are employed within professional and scientific services. This suggests a potential local labour force to support direct and indirect construction employment, including support for the supply chain and specialist components required for the construction of the Proposed Development.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ONS 2021, BRES [downloaded from NOMIS 07 February 2024]



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ONS, 2021 Census Data. Table TS066 [downloaded from NOMIS 07 February 2024]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ONS, 2021 Census Data. Table TS066 [downloaded from NOMIS 07 February 2024]

Table 2.1 Percentage of the Workforce (workplace-based) by Industrial Sector

Industry	NYC	Yorkshire and The Humber	England
1: Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	3%	1%	1%
2: Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	1%	1%	1%
3: Manufacturing (C)	12%	11%	8%
4: Construction (F)	4%	5%	5%
5: Motor trades (Part G)	2%	2%	2%
6: Wholesale (Part G)	4%	4%	4%
7: Retail (Part G)	10%	9%	9%
8: Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	4%	5%	5%
9: Accommodation & food services (I)	12%	7%	8%
10: Information & communication (J)	2%	3%	5%
11: Financial & insurance (K)	2%	3%	3%
12: Property (L)	2%	1%	2%
13: Professional, scientific & technical (M)	7%	6%	9%
14: Business administration & support services (N)	8%	9%	9%
15: Public administration & defence (O)	4%	5%	4%
16: Education (P)	7%	9%	9%
17: Health (Q)	12%	15%	13%
18: Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	4%	4%	4%
Total*	100%	100%	100%

Source ONS, 2021 BRES [downloaded from NOMIS 07 February 2024].

- 2.6 Table 2.2 sets out the qualification profile, and corresponding definitions, across North Yorkshire (2021 Census). North Yorkshire presents a well-qualified population with 34.7% having Level 4 qualifications or above. This is comparatively high against the regional average (29.5%) and national average (33.9%).
- 2.7 Approximately 82,990 (16.1%) residents (aged 16 and over) within North Yorkshire are recorded as having no qualifications. A review of this population demonstrates that 26% of those with no qualifications are in employment, equating to 21,580 residents. A further 1,207 (1%) of those with no qualifications are economically active but currently unemployed. 67% of residents with no qualifications are economically inactive, equating to 55,450 residents<sup>4</sup>. This presents the potential to upskill a large proportion of the population and provide employment opportunities through the delivery of skills development<sup>5</sup> pathways.
- 2.8 6.6% of NYC residents (aged 16 and over) are currently undertaking apprenticeships. This translates to 33,901 individuals. This proportion is currently higher than both the regional

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> ONS, 2021 Census Data. Table RM048 [downloaded from NOMIS 07 February 2024]



<sup>\*</sup>All figures are rounded and may not sum.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The economically inactive population excludes full-time students

## **EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN**Resident Employment Profile of North Yorkshire

(6.1%) and national averages (5.3%). This presents the opportunity to support those currently undertaking apprenticeships in related industries to translate their skills into full-time employment in STEM related fields.

Table 2.2: Skill Profile

Level of Qualification	Level Details/ Equivalents	NYC	Yorkshire and The Humber	England
No qualifications	Not applicable	16.1%	20.6%	18.1%
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	1 to 4 GCSEs grade A* to C, Any GCSEs at other grades, O levels or CSEs (any grades), 1 AS level, NVQ level 1, Foundation GNVQ, Basic or Essential Skills	9.2%	10.1%	9.7%
Level 2 qualifications	5 or more GCSEs (A* to C or 9 to 4), O levels (passes), CSEs (grade 1), School Certification, 1 A level, 2 to 3 AS levels, VCEs, Intermediate or Higher Diploma, Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma, NVQ level 2, Intermediate GNVQ, City and Guilds Craft, BTEC First or General Diploma, RSA Diploma	14%	13.6%	13.3%
Level 3 qualifications	2 or more A levels or VCEs, 4 or more AS levels, Higher School Certificate, Progression or Advanced Diploma, Welsh Baccalaureate Advance Diploma, NVQ level 3; Advanced GNVQ, City and Guilds Advanced Craft, ONC, OND, BTEC National, RSA Advanced Diploma	17%	17.4%	16.9%
Level 4 qualifications or above	NVQ level 4 to 5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher level, professional qualifications (for example, teaching, nursing, accountancy.	34.7%	29.5%	33.9%
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship, aged 16 or over and combine working with studying to gain skills and knowledge in a specific job.	6.6%	6.1%	5.3%
Other qualifications	Other qualifications: vocational or work-related qualifications, other qualifications achieved in England or Wales, qualifications achieved outside England or Wales (equivalent not stated or unknow)	2.4%	2.6%	2.8%
	Total*	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2021, ONS Census Data. Table TS067 [downloaded from NOMIS 07 February 2024].

2.9 Section 2 demonstrates an active and well-educated labour force (a high proportion of the population having achieved level 4+) within North Yorkshire, which performs better than the regional and national average. There is also the potential to support employment opportunities through the upskilling of those currently seeking employment and those working in apprenticeship schemes.



<sup>\*</sup>All figures are rounded and may not sum.

### 3 Local Employment and Skills Guidance

3.1 A review has been undertaken of NYC's guidance and strategy relating to opportunities for employment, and the development of skills and education. Relevant guidance is summarised as follows:

#### a) The York and North Yorkshire Enterprise Partnership Skill Strategy 2021 to 20266

- 3.2 The York and North Yorkshire Enterprise Partnership Skills Strategy sets out how the York and North Yorkshire partnership plan to develop employment and skills amongst the area's population. The Strategy aims to ensure young people are equipped to make well-informed decisions about education, training, and careers through linking schools with local businesses. The Strategy also endeavours to understand labour market needs and give employers access to the necessary skills needed to grow inclusive and productive workspaces.
- 3.3 The Skill Strategy comprises four ambitions for York and North Yorkshire. This includes four ambitions aiming to develop employment and skills in the population, they include; equipping young people to make decisions about education and careers, giving employers access to skills to be productive and inclusive, enable businesses through local skills providers to foster innovation and a dynamic economy, and empower communities through learning and skills.

### b) The York and North Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan 20237

- 3.4 The York and North Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan highlights the challenges faced by York and North Yorkshire in relation to employment and skills, including the ageing population, skills shortages, and low awareness of employment opportunities available.
- 3.5 The Construction sector is a major employer, but faces impending skill shortages due to individuals retiring, and demand for sustainable techniques. Female representation is low in skilled trade roles. The industry is rebounding post-pandemic, but faces shortages in professional roles and skilled trades. Efforts to improve diversity and inclusion include apprenticeship support and workshops. The Skills Village in Scarborough is a model for training initiatives. Engaging local construction firms for partnerships remains a challenge, but could support curriculum development for emerging construction trends.
- 3.6 The Plan sets out initiatives to overcome this through:
  - Growing apprenticeship provision, especially in STEM industries, by collaborating
    with local business, promoting apprenticeships at educational institutions, support
    training providers with curriculums and effective teaching methods, and providing

The York and North Yorkshire Skills Improvement Plan 2023 accessed at: https://www.wnychamber.co.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/LSIP\_York\_and\_North\_Yorkshire\_2023.pdf



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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The York and North Yorkshire Enterprise Partnership Skill Strategy 2021 to 2026 accessed at: www.ynylep.com/strategies/supporting-strategies/skills-strategy
<sup>7</sup> The York and North Yorkshire Skills Improvement Plan 2023 accessed at:

## **EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN Local Employment and Skills Guidance**

- sector-specific initiatives to foster apprenticeship growth alongside T-levels, which also have a work-placement component.
- Focusing on disadvantaged groups by encouraging inclusion and a people-centric approach. By collaborating with local authorities, educational institutions, and communities, tailored skills provision will meet the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- Encouraging upskilling through business-centric provision, inclusive access for all, sector-specific skills, and collaboration with employers and providers. The Plan recognises the need to address diverse needs, and tailoring skills provision to benefit both businesses and individuals.

# c) The Economic Growth Strategy for North Yorkshire Council 2024 to 2029 – Draft October 20238

- 3.7 The Economic Growth Strategy for NYC aligns with the Skills Strategy and the Local Skills Improvement Plan, recognising the importance of attracting and retaining young and older working residents, promoting technical education and apprenticeships, supporting digital skills and talent, and tackling barriers to work such as transport.
- 3.8 The vision for growth in North Yorkshire is to be innovative and a carbon negative economy, driven by productive and entrepreneurial businesses and the places and communities that make North Yorkshire distinctive. It covers three pillars; supporting the growth of businesses, investing in infrastructure and connectivity, and creating skilled and prosperous communities.
- 3.9 The Applicant has developed this ESP in line with the objectives identified above, to inform a strategy that will provide and encourage opportunities for the development of skills and employment.

The Economic Growth Strategy for North Yorkshire Council 2024 to 2029 accessed at: https://edemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/documents/s24559/NYC%20Economic%20Growth%20Strategy%20for%20Adoption.pdf



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- 4.1 The ESP is devised to outline the objectives of the Applicant to deliver opportunities for employment and the development of skills throughout the 12-month construction phase at the Proposed Development.
- 4.2 The objectives and output opportunities outlined in this ESP have been influenced by the socio-economic research presented in Section 2 and NYC's current employment and skills development targets reviewed in Section 3.
- 4.3 Section 2 has demonstrated an economically active labour force working within the construction industry, accounting for approximately 4% of the resident workforce of NYC. A further 12% are employed within manufacturing and 1% within the utilities industry. This suggests, where viable and available, the potential to support local labour employment throughout the construction phase of the Proposed Development. There is also evidence of upskilling opportunities amongst the population, for example 0.2% of economically active residents within North Yorkshire currently have no qualifications and are unemployed.
- 4.4 A review of NYC's employment and skills ambitions in Section 3 concludes that the following output opportunities need to be considered within this ESP in order to support NYC's growth plans; these comprise:
  - Ensure young people are equipped to make informed decisions about their options for education, training, and careers through linking schools with local businesses in order to provide mentorship opportunities for local students;
  - Improve the local provision and attainment of STEM skill levels to increase employers' access to the necessary skills needed to grow inclusive and productive workspaces;
  - Overcome skills shortages by growing the provision of apprenticeships, focusing on disadvantaged groups, connecting businesses with people and skills, and by promoting skills development.
- 4.5 The construction period of the Proposed Development will take approximately 12 months. This ESP will align the existing socio-economic context and NYC's adopted employment and skills development targets, with indicative output opportunities for employment and skills development throughout the construction phase.
- 4.6 The opportunities put forward by the Applicant at this stage represent best endeavours and remain subject to accessibility and commercial viability inputs. The Applicant will discuss with contractors, sub-contractors, and suppliers their intentions to deliver the following output opportunities. This could potentially be secured through contractual obligations.
- 4.7 The output opportunities listed below are formulated following guidance provided by the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfC) programme, in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), and also support NYC's skills development targets. The guidance is designed to be used for construction procurement and planning to aid the creation of employment and skills interventions, including apprenticeships, work

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placements, job creation and upskilling opportunities that are relevant and proportionate to the construction activity being undertaken.

#### **Output Opportunity - Work Experience Placements** a)

- 4.8 Where viable, the Applicant will endeavour to work with local students from schools, colleges, and universities to facilitate work-experience placements. Likewise, where possible, the Applicant will support individuals who are not enrolled in a course of education/ study to undertake placements. Education establishments could include Holy Family Catholic High School, Selby College would also be considered: this operates a construction and civil engineering department. Selby College has recently introduced a range of parttime courses designed to provide technical skills and capabilities for green technologies.
- 4.9 If the opportunity is feasible, a project skill co-ordinator representative on behalf of the Applicant or the associated contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers will liaise with the appropriate education establishment or skill development organisation. This could include individuals from organisations, who operate in the NYC area, such as The Heart of Yorkshire Education Group, Blueberry Academy, Welfare to Work, Princes Trust, Probation Service, Job Centre Plus, Women into Construction, Armed Forces re-settlement programmes or local community organisations. This could also support individuals seeking a career change.
- 4.10 The Applicant acknowledges the importance of work placement opportunities and will encourage contractors, sub-contractors, and suppliers to operate with the intention to consider and deliver these opportunity outputs.

#### Output Opportunity - Jobs Created by the Project b)

- 4.11 The construction programme will endeavour to support local jobs seekers, creating new and sustainable job opportunities for new entrants through pathways such as apprenticeships. graduate placements and opportunities for unemployed residents.
- 4.12 The requirement to host these opportunities could, where practicable and viable, be indicatively written into the proposed scope of works for goods and services by contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers. The Applicant will consider requiring contractors to provide opportunities for the creation of apprenticeships during construction as part of its procurement process.
- 4.13 In recognition of the gradual shift from on-site construction to off-site manufacturing and the increased involvement of designers and engineers in creating sustainable pre-formed products, the Applicant anticipates that some of the new jobs, work experience and placement roles could be office-based alongside architects, engineers and other mainly desk-based professions.
- 4.14 Some elements of the Proposed Development will require specially trained or commissioned technology providers, as well as specialised equipment and materials. Such specialist elements require specially trained or commissioned staff. Opportunities for local firms to be involved in elements of the Proposed Development delivery will be explored where commercially viable and available, where possible The Applicant endeavours to source



labour and material locally. Where commercially viable, available and feasible the Applicant will procure goods and services from local contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers to support local employment.

# c) Output Opportunity - Construction Careers Information, Advice, and Guidance (CCIAG) Events

- 4.15 The Applicant will investigate the potential for a programme of activities which promote industry related education and careers, focusing on improving the image of the sector. The programme of activities has not been agreed at this stage but are likely to include some of the initiatives described below.
- 4.16 Events are aimed at increasing awareness of the opportunities available within the industry, what it is like to work in Construction and how to get into the sector. To be counted, the activity must be formally structured, agreed by the project and the participating organisation. This could be targeted at primary school pupils (such as the local Carlton Primary School and Camblesforth Community Primary School), secondary school pupils, college students and/or other young people in the area. At appropriate intervals, the Applicant will endeavour to organise events (during the construction phase of the Proposed Development), communicating with local influencers (e.g. schools/universities, adult influencers, careers advisors, learning providers, community groups), under graduates and entrants aged 14 to 19 (e.g. persons currently not in education, employment or training, or school students, school leavers, college students). The timing of such visits will be arranged to ensure minimal risk to visitors if during construction.
- 4.17 Initiatives could include project staff, throughout the construction phase, volunteering to run interactive workshops or give talks and site visits/ tours. This this will provide opportunities to engage with local groups and increase awareness of renewable technologies as a potential career path and curriculum support, comprising the following:
  - Career inspiration: speakers and role models to inspire and encourage career progression;
  - Curriculum support: advice on curriculum design to bring employer relevance into lessons;
  - Employability: mentoring and support for specific cohorts of young people (e.g. underachievers, high achievers, young people from particular areas or estates), sessions on employer expectations, mock interviews and interview preparation; and
  - Work-based learning: workplace visits to complement curriculum and work experience placements.
- 4.18 Delivery partners could include the local Carlton Primary School, Camblesforth Community Primary School, and Holy Family Catholic High School. Selby College would also be considered; this operates a construction and civil engineering department. Groups such as Scarborough Green Construction Skills Village is an example of how NYC is developing employment skills within the industry. This Skills Village is open to teenagers and students, and any adults or unemployed seeking a career change or to upskills. It creates new training opportunities for local people to gain skills in low carbon and green construction technologies.



### d) Output Opportunity - Training and Qualifying the Workforce

4.19 The Applicant will endeavour to work with contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers that provide opportunities for the creation of training places and training programs during construction phase. The Applicant will encourage contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers to offer training and upskilling to employees across the construction workforce through vocational awards and diplomas, apprenticeship completions and professional qualifications. The intent would be to support the achievement of vocational qualifications (e.g. BTEC, City and Guilds, NVQ, HNC/HND) at various levels which are relevant to the delivery of the Proposed Development. Engagement with potential contractors and local training providers could highlight gaps in the skills required to deliver the Proposed Development, and therefore identify specific courses which could be particularly relevant.

### e) Output Opportunity - Liaison with Local Community

- 4.20 The Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive strategy for pre-application consultation with key stakeholders and the local community. The engagement strategy was developed with consideration of the government's policy on community involvement.
- The Applicant undertook informal non-statutory consultation on the proposals prior to the commencement of the statutory consultation. This informal consultation was designed to introduce the Proposed Development, present the initial proposals for the scheme design, and seek feedback on the early environmental considerations and potential local community benefit that could arise as a result of the Proposed Development. The informal consultation phase took place for four weeks between the 30th June and 28th July 2022 and was targeted at the communities around the site within the Core Consultation Zone (CCZ). Newsletters were issued to local communities and stakeholders in advance of public consultation events in Camblesforth and Carlton. These newsletters contained information about the proposals, where to find out more information, and had a detachable Freepost comments card so recipients could provide their feedback directly to the project team.
- 4.22 The formal consultation period took place from 26th October 2023, running for a six-week period, until 7th December 2023 (then extended to 21st December 2023). For further details please see the Statement of Community Consultation<sup>9</sup> (SoCC) (October 2023), this provides information about the proposed strategy and approach for consultation with local communities in accordance with section 47 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) ('PA2008') for the Helios Renewable Energy Project.

#### **Summary**

4.23 Section 4 demonstrates an understanding and commitment by The Applicant to support employment and skills development. The Applicant fully supports initiatives to develop participation in skills development, employment and training programmes to maximise economic growth, productivity, social and economic outcomes within the local area. The Applicant will seek to utilise existing pathways and develop further opportunities to promote

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Helios Renewable Energy Project, October 2023.



### **EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN**

Employment and Skills Plan

- employment and skills development. Section 4 demonstrates an understanding of the structured approach, and the necessary future dialogue needed.
- 4.24 This document represents an initial framework for further discussions on the detail of the ESP and confirms The Applicant commitment to working with the NYC. At the point at which a contractor is appointed, The Applicant will have further discussions with NYC to agree precise targets and timeframe for their delivery.

