Botley West Solar Farm

Environmental Statement

Volume 3

Appendix 15.2: Outline Skills and Employment Plan

November 2024

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1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (OSSCEP) has been prepared to accompany the Application for a Development Consent for the Botley West Solar Farm (the Project). Its purpose is to maximise and pro-actively expand the economic benefits of the Project for the local community.

1.1.2 The OSSCEP sets out the likely economic benefits of the Project, and the context and characteristics of the local community and economy in which it is located. It then identifies potential opportunities for activities relating to Skills, Supply Chain and Employment (SSCE) which PVDP (the Applicant) could take forward post-consent. These activities will help local individuals and businesses access the SSCE benefits associated with the Project. The OSSCEP identifies means for publicising SSCE opportunities and for joint working with key partners going forwards. It also provides a framework for future delivery.

1.2 Opportunities

1.2.1 Seven potential opportunities or work areas, across skills, employment, and supply chain, have been identified that the Applicant could take forward.

Skills Opportunities

Opportunity 1 – Apprenticeships

1.2.2 The Applicant will create a programme to promote apprenticeships during the various phases of the Project. The Applicant has already engaged with some key stakeholders in this area and the OSSCEP identifies other potential local partners of relevance. The Applicant will liaise with the relevant local authorities to agree on a minimum number of apprenticeships to hire during construction.

Opportunity 2 – Other Workforce Training

1.2.3 The Applicant will support the training of employees and workers on the Project. This will include identifying gaps in the skills required to deliver the Project and supporting employees in gaining the relevant vocational qualifications to fill these gaps. The Applicant will seek to work with specialist training providers who will assist in training their workforce. The Applicant will liaise with the relevant local authorities to build upon this workforce training plan.

Opportunity 3 – STEM Education and Careers

1.2.4 The Applicant will investigate the potential for a programme of activities which promote science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and careers. This will be targeted at primary school pupils, secondary school pupils, college students and / or other young people in the

area. This education will include school visits (on site and at schools), online workshops and media e.g. video or infographics content that can be distributed to the aforementioned groups through the Applicant's network of education and career partners.

Employment Opportunities

Opportunity 4 – Local Recruitment

1.2.5 The Applicant will investigate measures to promote take up of jobs generated by the Project by local people. The starting point will be engagement with Local Authorities and Job Centre Plus (which the Applicant have already begun), in order to tap into existing local employment support networks. The Applicant will liaise with the relevant local authorities to set a % target for local hiring.

Opportunity 5 – Maximising Diversity of the Workforce

1.2.6 The Applicant will introduce initiatives to maximise the diversity of the workforce. These measures will relate to a variety of disadvantaged groups with a focus (although not exhaustive) on young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) which often include a range of young people with a variety of disadvantages therefore this approach can maximise impact. This approach was organically recommended through discussions with Oxford Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP).

Supply Chain Opportunities

Opportunity 6 - Business Networking and Support

1.2.7 The Applicant will work with local partners to communicate opportunities for purchasing and contracts arising from the Project to local businesses. This will include building on existing relationships with Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and creating new relationships with: Oxfordshire City Council; Oxfordshire County Council; Co-Train; Cherwell District Council; The Careers and Enterprise Company; British Association of Supported Employment; Thames Valley Skills Unit; Oxfordshire Construction Training Group; No Limits Programme; Cherwell Collective; Bicester Construction Skills Centre; Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce; Abingdon and Witney College; Oxford Brooks University; University of Oxford; Oxfordshire Jobcentre Plus; Oxfordshire Careers Hub; Net Zero Skills Hub, AWC; selected Primary and Secondary Schools; as well as identifying other potential partners including the Local Authorities.

Opportunity 7 – Procurement Strategy

1.2.8 The Applicant will create a procurement strategy for the Project with the purpose to maximise opportunities to local businesses. The Applicant will liaise with the relevant local authorities and particularly the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce to inform their procurement strategy and source local suppliers.

1.3 Delivery

1.3.1 Potential delivery arrangements for the OSSCEP are set out below in Section 7. These include an organisational framework with suggested roles and responsibilities, identification of key partners, and a timeline for development of a full Skills, Supply Chain and Employment (SSCE) plan and its implementation post- consent.

1.4 Monitoring

1.4.1 It is important that the Applicant's SSCE activities can be effectively monitored and measured. Potential methods for performance monitoring are set out, including some illustrative outputs and outcomes which would indicate if the objectives and aims of the OSSCEP are being achieved.

2 Introduction

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The Botley West Solar Farm (the Project) will generate substantial economic benefits including new jobs and expenditure. The Applicant aims to maximise and pro-actively expand these benefits for the local community.

2.1.2 This Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (OSSCEP) is an important early step in achieving this goal. It sets out the likely economic benefits of the Project, and the context and characteristics of the local community and economy in which it is located. It describes the initial work which has been undertaken by the Applicant to identify the potential workers, skills, equipment and services required to deliver the Project, and to engage with relevant stakeholders. The OSSCEP goes on to identify potential opportunities for activities relating to Skills, Supply Chain and Employment (SSCE) which the Applicant could take forward post-consent. These activities will help local individuals and businesses access the SSCE benefits associated with the Project. The OSSCEP identifies means for publicising SSCE opportunities and for joint working with key partners going forward. It also provides a framework for future delivery.

2.1.3 This document is an outline plan that will develop into a more detailed Skills, Supply Chain and Employment (SSCE) plan, which will be secured through a requirement included in the DCO for the Project. The SSCE plan will be subject to approval by the relevant planning authorities – West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.

2.2 The Project

2.2.1 The Project is a large-scale solar farm to the West of Oxfordshire. Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) is a developer of solar power projects. PVDP will be the Applicant for this project on behalf of SolarFive Ltd, which holds the connection agreement with National Grid and is licensed by Ofgem as an electricity generator. Botley West Solar Farm will connect to a new National Grid Substation, proposed to be built and located west of Botley, hence the name Botley West.

2.2.2 The Applicant intends to submit an application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) under the Planning Act 2008. The proposal is to install and operate approximately 840MWe of solar generation in parts of West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Vale of White Horse Districts providing secure and clean energy to the equivalent of approximately 330,000 homes. The application will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES) prepared in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, as amended (the EIA Regulations), and other required documents including a statement on pre-application consultation.

2.2.3 The location for the main economic activity will be West Oxfordshire, across the planning authorities of Cherwell, West Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

2.2.4 The main components of the Project are: solar PV Modules; construction machinery; Power Converter Stations (converters, transformers and supporting equipment) fencing; cables; power convert stations; High Voltage Transformers, including feeders, switchgear and supporting equipment; drainage; Electricity export cabling and connection to the NGET substation; NGET substation(s); Fencing, security and ancillary infrastructure; Accesses from the highway and tracks; Green infrastructure (GI) and construction site facilities (e.g. lighting, accommodation, container office, container accommodation, waste containers, fuel station).

2.2.5 The Project will connect to a new National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) system, via a new National Grid 400kV substation, to be located close to the existing National Grid 400kV line that runs between Cowley in Oxford, westwards to Walham, in Gloucestershire. The 400kV cables will be buried and will connect the Project to the aforementioned substation to allow distribution to the national transmission network.

2.2.6 The indicative timescales for the construction and operation of the Project that have been assumed for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment is as follows:

a. It is currently anticipated that (subject to the necessary consents being granted) **construction work will commence, at the earliest, in Q1 2026** and will run for 24 months.

b. It is currently anticipated that the earliest the Project will **commence commercial operation will be from Q3 2028**. Depending on the final construction programme and commencement of construction, the operation may overlap with the construction.

c. The consent being sought by the Project is a temporary one. The Project will have **a 37.5 year lease (at the earliest Q1 2066)**, with the option to extend to 42 years to Q1 2068. Decommissioning is likely to start two years before the end of the lease and be completed in that time. All infrastructure associated with the development Botley West Solar Farm will be removed. The exception to this is assumed to be all cables in the public highway. The National Grid substation will remain. A decommissioning and enhancement plan will be developed as part of the DCO application.

2.3 Structure of this Document

2.3.1 The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

1. Section 3 summarises the scale and nature of likely economic effects of the Project, which the OSSCEP aims to maximise. The key impacts comprise jobs generated during the construction, demolition and decommissioning phase, and spending on goods and services.

2. Section 4 summarises the aims of local planning policy and economic development strategy with regard to jobs, skills and economic development.
3. Section 5 presents a profile of the local population, workforce and economy, in order to understand how a SSCE plan can best meet local needs and maximise economic benefits of the Project for the local community.
4. Section 6 presents a long-list of potential opportunities for the Project relating to SSCE. Within each opportunity or area of work, a number of activities are described which could be developed in more detail and pursued post-consent.
5. Section 7 proposes a broad approach to developing and delivering the OSSCEP post-consent, including a potential organisational structure and partnerships. An indicative timeline for SSCE plan development and implementation is also set out.
6. Section 8 describes elements of a potential monitoring framework, including potential target outputs and outcomes.

3 SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section summarises the scale of employment and GVA benefits that may arise from delivery of the Project. It also summarises the type of jobs, skills, equipment, and materials required for the delivery of the Project.

3.2 Summary of Employment and GVA Benefits

3.2.1 The employment and GVA benefits associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project are summarised in the sections below. Full details are available in the Socio-Economics Chapter (Chapter 15) of the Environmental Statement.

Study Area

3.2.2 The study area for assessment of economic impacts has been defined in accordance with Homes England's 'Additionality Guide, A Standard Approach to Assessing the Additional Impact of Projects, 4th Edition' (the HCA Additionality Guide).

3.2.3 The potential economic impacts arising from the Project (e.g. employment) are considered relative to the Oxford Travel to Work Area (TTWA). This represents the principal labour market catchment area for the Project, particularly given that it overlaps with the prescription of a functional economic market area (FEMA) within the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (2021). Travel to Work Areas are a useful starting point for understanding the spatial extents of labour markets. Each TTWA has a high degree of self-containment; meaning that the vast majority of people who work within the TTWA also live in that same area, therefore can reasonably be expected to benefit from economic impacts arising from the Project and constitutes the relevant labour market for the Project.

Construction (no earlier than autumn 2025)

Employment

3.2.4 Construction is estimated to last for 24 months and create up to 17,472 person years of direct and indirect employment connected to the construction and development phase.

3.2.5 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) 2020 data suggests that for every job supported on-site, 1.08 indirect/induced jobs are supported in the wider economy.

3.2.6 Applying this multiplier to the total number of person years of employment results in 8,400 years of direct employment and 9,072 years of indirect and induced employment. Based on the 2017 study into regional electricity generation and employment in UK regions; 70% of these direct jobs (5,880) are estimated to be direct construction and manufacturing employment, with

11% of jobs related to associated professional services 10% of jobs related to wholesale/retail trade, 4% transport and communication-related, 3% financial services and 2% others.

3.2.7 The 'Regional electricity generation and employment in UK regions' study states that more established technologies (e.g. Solar PV) can have a high level of employment impact, driven by the high proportion of development cost that is physical installation (often reliant on local labour), and the local sourcing of some device and ancillary elements. On that basis, it is assumed that a lower percentage (40%) of the direct jobs would be related to manufacturing, with a higher proportion (60%) associated with the physical installation. On this basis the project would create 3,528 direct person-years of construction employment.

3.2.8 In order to provide a more realistic net employment figure in the local economy, a displacement factor of 25% is applied to the direct construction jobs. This accounts for construction workers moving between projects when faced with delays or deadlines.

3.2.9 Applying this level of displacement results in a net direct construction employment figure of 2,646 direct person years of construction employment.

3.2.10 Based on Census 2021 data and the HCA Additionality Guide (now Homes England), a 25% leakage adjustment has also been applied to the above estimate. This is to account for the jobs filled by individuals outside of the Study Area. On this basis the Project would create circa 1,985 local direct construction jobs within the Study Area.

3.2.11 Based on our professional industry experience and in line with other EIA Application socio-economic methodologies that have withstood DCO examination and public inquiry, it is considered that one permanent Full Time Equivalent (FTE) construction job is equivalent to ten person-years of temporary employment. Therefore, on this basis, the construction phase is estimated to create up to around 199 local direct FTE jobs.

3.2.12 The net additional construction employment, reflecting the above, is summarised in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Net Additional Construction Employment from the Project

	Travel Study Area	Outside Study Area *(due to 25% leakage)*	Total
Direct Construction Employment – (Person Years)	2,646	882	3,528
Person Years of Employment after Displacement (25% loss)	-661	N/A	2,867
Total Net Direct Construction Employment Person Years	1,985		
Net Direct Full-Time Equivalent	**199**	88	353

Construction Gross Value Added (GVA)

3.2.13 The average GVA per worker in the construction industry across the study area is £85,377 per annum (BRES 2022). By applying this figure to the net direct construction workers generated by the Project (199), it is estimated the construction phase will contribute £17m within the study area.

Operation and Maintenance (no earlier than Q3 2028)

3.2.14 The operational stage is expected to last for 37.5 years. During the operational stage, a project of 840MW of installed solar capacity is estimated to support 336 full time equivalent direct and indirect jobs. This is based on the 2017 Cardiff University study into regional electricity generation and employment in UK regions (0.4 FTE per MW).

3.2.15 The latest Solar PV developments employment multipliers taken from ONS data for 'Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy' (2020) were applied, which was 2.08. This means for every full-time direct job, there will be 1.08 full-time indirect jobs created outside of the study area associated with supply chain and wage effects. This results in 162 direct FTE jobs and 174 FTE indirect jobs.

3.2.16 A high level of displacement at 75% has been applied due to the specialist nature of the roles and their limited supply in the study area. This leaves c.40 direct operation and maintenance jobs in the study area per annum.

3.2.17 To this number a high leakage figure of 50%, has also been assumed to account for workers from outside the study area who may commute into the area to work on this project. This would lead to c.20 direct local FTE jobs in the local economy. The jobs created will be in the renewable energy sector, assisting the UK's transition to net zero.

Agricultural Employment Gain

3.2.18 The Project also proposes sheep grazing. The Project will include sheep grazing under the installation area of the solar array (838.5ha).

3.2.19 In order to estimate the likely employment generated by the sheep grazing on site, RPS have reviewed BRE's 'Agricultural Good Practice Guidance for Solar Farms' (2014). This states "between 4 and 8 sheep/hectare may be achievable" on solar farms. On a worst case scenario basis the lower limit of 4 sheep per ha has been assumed. This means Given that the sheep grazing will take place on 838.5 ha of land, this would equate to approximately 3,354 sheep grazing (4 sheep x 838.5ha) the solar areas of the site.

3.2.20 According to the Nix Farm Management Pocketbook (2024)[1], a standard work day (SWD) is a general estimate of the farm labour requirement for a farm enterprise. A standard work year is defined as 2,200 hours, and these total hours are converted into 275 notional 8-hour standard work days. In the Nix Farm Pocketbook, it is estimated that the amount of Standard Work

[1] Graham Redman, Nix Farm Management Pocketbook, 55th Edition (Agro Business Consultants Ltd, 2024), 205.

Day's (SWD) required per head of sheep equates to 0.5. Subsequently, 3,354 sheep would require 1,677 SWD's (3,354 sheep x 0.5 SWD per sheep). This equates to 6 direct FTE jobs per year (1,677 SWD's divided by 275 notional days). There will be no leakage or displacement associated with these sheep grazing jobs as they are exclusively contained within the study area.

3.2.21 The net total operation jobs created in the study area is to 26 FTE for the total of the operational phase for the total of the operational phase as seen in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: Net Additional Operation Employment per annum from the Project

	Travel Study Area	Outside Study Area *(due to 50% leakage)*	Total
Direct Operational Employment (FTE)	81	81	162
Direct Displacement *(75% loss)*	-61	-61	-122
Net Direct Employment	20	20	40
Net Direct Agricultural Employment Gain	6	0	6
Total Net Operational Employment	**26**	20	46

Decommissioning (no earlier than autumn 2059)

3.2.22 The number of construction jobs created by the decommissioning stage is considered to be commensurate with the construction stage (199 net direct construction jobs within the study area), however, it is likely the number of indirect jobs created in the supply chain will be reduced as there will be no requirement for manufacturing the solar panels. There will, however, be some indirect job creation associated with the recycling of panels and equipment which is likely to offset this.

3.3 Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

3.3.1 The Applicant has identified the potential types of jobs and skills likely to be required during the construction and operation phases of the Project. This information is summarised in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Summary of Jobs and Skills Requirements

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
Construction	Civil Workers	Preparation of the Sites. Work includes: • the removal and storage of topsoil and levelling of the land as required; • preparation and build of any access roads, internal to the site and for access onto and away from the site; • the digging of trenches for wiring; and • preparation for and laying foundations for the solar stations, on-site substations and BESS.	Use of machinery, such as dump trucks, diggers and compactors.
	Labourers	Labour to place wiring and ducting in the trenches and to transport materials as required around the Sites.	No specific qualifications required.
	Building Construction	Labour to build the storage sheds.	Relevant construction qualifications required.
	Racking Structure Assembler	Manage a ramming machine to create the solar structure and assemble the associated structures.	Skilled workers required to control the ramming 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.
	Low Voltage (LV) Electrical Engineers	Connecting the panels with inverters and solar stations.	Skills for LV wiring and installation of equipment required.
	Medium Voltage (MV) Electrical Engineers	Connecting the solar stations with the on-site substations.	Skills for MV wiring and installation of equipment required.

Phase	Job Name	Job Description	Skills
	High Voltage (HV) Electrical Engineers	Connecting the on-site substations and transformers with the transmission network.	Skills for HV wiring and installation of equipment required.
	Security Guards	Protecting the site during the construction process.	Protect the security of the site during construction.
	CCTV Workers	Setting up the security system.	Installation of CCTV system and equipment.
	Fencing Installation Workers	Installation of the perimeter fencing including any gates for access.	Installation of fencing.
	Landscape Installation Workers	Installation of all landscaping, such as planting.	Installation of the landscaping works area.
Operations	Electrical Engineers	To monitor and trouble-shoot any problems.	LV, MV, and HV electrical specialists required.
	Performance Managers	To monitor and trouble-shoot any problems via software remotely from the office.	
	CCTV and Security	To monitor security of the site.	
	Landscape Monitoring and Managers	To deliver watering strategy and monitor and maintain the landscape/ecology areas within the Project.	

3.3.2 Although not a ranking of specialism, out of the 16 jobs listed above, 7 (44%) relate directly to the operation of a solar farm (these are highlighted in green), and therefore “help to develop the skills needed for the UK’s transition to Net Zero” (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) 2023).

3.4 Summary of Equipment Requirements

3.4.1 The Applicant has identified the potential types of jobs and skills likely to be required during the construction and operation phases of the Project. This information is summarised in **Table 3.4**Table .

3.4.2 For clarity, the Project does not incorporate any battery storage. Energy generated by the Project will be stored, as required, by Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) that are connected to the Grid elsewhere, including the EDF 50MW BESS located at Cowley substation.

Table 3.4: Summary of Equipment and Material Requirements

PV Park
Transformer
Switchgear (cells)
HV Cable
LV Cable
Earthing
Civil Materials (e.g. gravel)
Module
Inverter
Racks/Structure
CCTV

3.4.3 The Applicant has undertaken initial investigations to identify what equipment and materials can be sourced locally.

3.4.4 The Applicant has built strong relationships with OxLEP, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and Oxford Low Carbon Hub. The Applicant will use these facilitators to make connections with local suppliers.

3.4.5 OxLEP have said they will help the Applicant to organise and publicise supplier fairs in order to ensure the Applicant can buy as locally as possible.

3.4.6 The Applicant is already receiving approaches via LinkedIn from potential local suppliers. Post DCO submission, the Applicant will have a local supplier contact form section on the BWSF website to collect interest with the aim for potential procurement.

4 LOCAL COMMUNITY PROFILE

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 This chapter identifies characteristics of the local population, workforce and economy which are relevant to developing an SSCE plan which effectively meets local needs and maximises the benefits of the Project.

4.1.2 This Local Community Profile uses the study area defined in the Botley West PIER, TTWA.

4.2 Population

4.2.1 The evidence in this section is primarily based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census 2021 data, NOMIS (official labour market statistics) datasets, and housing market data from the Land Registry online which provides data for Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) and Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs) and allows for an analysis of the characteristics of the study area. While this data is not recent, it provides the most robust evidence base for local level data as it is the most recent data source to provide the required level of geographic breakdown.

4.2.2 The latest estimates state that the study area (West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and Cherwell) have a residential population of 724,162 (2021), in 2011 it was 637,865 representing a 11.8% increase over ten years. These population growth rates are higher compared to the South East region which saw a 7.5% growth rate for the same 10 year period.

4.2.3 Similarly looking at the working age population (16-64 age group), we can see that Oxford has the largest percentage (72.7%) which is much higher than the county and national averages of 65% and 63% respectively. Cherwell's working age population is commensurate with the county average whereas the other authorities in the study area have a slightly below average working age population of circa 61%.

4.2.4 Based on the most recent revised data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and taken from the Business Register & Employment Survey (BRES) in 2021 there were a total of 369,100 working people in the TTWA, of these, 312,500 (85%) work in the private sector, with the remaining working in the public sector.

4.2.5 Looking at the most recent employment rate and unemployment rate data, the study area has an average employment rate of 84.3%, whilst the average unemployment rate is 2.7% (as of December 2023). The average study area employment rate is larger than the South East average and the unemployment rate is smaller.

4.2.6 Out of the local authorities, West Oxfordshire had the highest employment rate and the lowest unemployment rate.

Table 4.1: ONS Employment and Unemployment Rate Activity (Year ending December 2023)

Local Authority	Employment Rate Activity and Unemployment Rate (Year ending December 2023)	
	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
Cherwell	84.7%	2.6%
West Oxfordshire	90.4%	2%
Vale of White Horse	81.4%	3%
South Oxfordshire	84%	2.4%
Oxford	80.8%	3.4%
Average Total (TTWA Study Area)	**84.3%**	**2.7%**
South East	79.3%	2.9%

4.3 Qualifications

4.3.1 In the study area, 41.8% of working age residents have a degree level qualification or higher (National Vocational Qualification (NVQ - Level 4+), which is above the English average, Oxford has the highest rate (48.1%) of those with Level 4 qualifications or above. See **Table 4.2** for further details.

Table 4.2: Highest Qualification – ONS 2021

Highest level of qualification	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxfordshire	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire	Study Area (Average)	England
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total: All usual residents aged 16 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No qualifications	16.0	12.6	12.4	12.5	13.9	13.5	18.1
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	10.5	6.1	8.5	8.5	9.5	8.6	9.7
Level 2 qualifications	13.9	7.6	12.7	12.2	13.4	12	13.3
Apprenticeship	5.6	2.8	4.8	5.0	5.4	4.7	5.3
Level 3 qualifications	16.1	20.6	15.7	15.4	17.2	17	16.9
Level 4 qualifications or above	35.1	48.1	43.6	44.0	38.3	41.8	33.9
Other qualifications	2.8	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.8

4.4 Commuting

4.4.1 According to the most recent data on commuting patterns from the 2011 (due to Covid 2021 commuting figures are unreliable for the 2021 census) See **Table 4.3, Table 4.4** and **Table 4.5** for commuting patterns.

Table 4.3: Cherwell Commuting Patterns (2011)

Usual Residence	Place of work (Cherwell)
Cherwell	34879
South Northamptonshire	4278
West Oxfordshire	3321
Oxford	2187
Aylesbury Vale	2160
Stratford-on-Avon	1377
Vale of White Horse	1366
South Oxfordshire	1014

Table 4.4: West Oxfordshire Commuting Patterns (2011)

Usual Residence	Place of work (West Oxfordshire)
West Oxfordshire	24437
Cherwell	2269
Vale of White Horse	1852
Oxford	1245
Cotswold	1052

Table 4.5: Vale of White Horse Commuting Patterns (2011)

Usual Residence	Place of work (Vale of White Horse)
Vale of White Horse	25228
South Oxfordshire	6217
Oxford	3574
West Oxfordshire	3051
Swindon	2552
Cherwell	1584
West Berkshire	1192

4.4.2 West Oxfordshire and Cherwell, appear in the top 3 Boroughs that commuters travel from to work in either Value of White Horse, West Oxfordshire or Cherwell. Vale of the White Horse commuters are the third most represented commuters who travel to work in West Oxfordshire commuters. West Oxfordshire and Cherwell appears in the bottom half for their number of residences who commute to Vale of the White Horse.

4.4.3 This implies that West Oxfordshire and Cherwell are more significant employment hubs for residents within the study area.

4.5 Workforce

4.5.1 **Table 4.6** presents a detailed breakdown of employment by broad industry group in the study area across relevant areas to the Botley West Solar Farm development.

4.5.2 Across the TTWA Study Area 4.7% of people are employed in Construction, which is slightly below the South East region, although Oxford has a much lower proportion (1.5%). West Oxfordshire has the highest proportion (6.7%) of workers employed in construction, however South Oxfordshire, Value of White Horse and Cherwell each have the joint highest total number (3,500).

4.5.3 As a proportion of population both South Oxfordshire (19%) and Value of White Horse (20.9%), have twice as many people employed in Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities than the each of the other TTWA Study Areas and the South East Region and Great Britain.

4.5.4 When looking at the average across all 5 study area Boroughs, 0.4% of people are employed in Electricity, Gas Steam and Air Conditioning supply, which is in line with the South East and Great Britain's proportions. Oxford has the highest number of those employed in this industry.

Table 4.6: Relevant Employees by Industry (ONS 2021)

	Construction (number)	Construction (%)	Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply (number)	Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply (%)	Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (number)	Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (%)
South Oxfordshire	3,500	6	150	0.5	11,000	19
Vale of White Horse	3,500	5.2	300	0.4	14,000	20.9
West Oxfordshire	3,000	6.7	20	0	4,000	8.9
Cherwell	3,500	4.4	350	0.4	7,000	8.8
Oxford	1,750	1.5	700	0.6	9,000	7.7
South East (%)		5.7		0.4		9.2
Great Britain (%)		4.9		0.4		8.9

4.5.5 **Table 4.7** compares 2024 employees by industry sector with 2021. We can see that agriculture only accounted for 0.5% of all employment circa 1,891 people in 2024 – compared to 2021 the sector has lost 18.3% of its employees.

4.5.6 The table below also shows that construction employment has decreased 0.1% across Oxfordshire (which is a negligible difference) and represents 4.4% of all employment.

Table 4.7: Oxfordshire - Employees by Industry Sector (% Change from 2021 to 2024)[2]

Sector (Oxfordshire)	Jobs	Proportion	Change	% Change
P: Education	55,738	14.40%	-383	-0.70%
G: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	53,561	13.80%	365	0.70%
M: Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	49,144	12.70%	2,824	6.10%
Q: Human Health and Social Work Activities	47,902	12.30%	1,613	3.50%
N: Administrative and Support Service Activities	34,334	8.80%	3,898	12.80%
I: Accommodation and Food Service Activities	26,749	6.90%	1,168	4.60%
C: Manufacturing	24,319	6.30%	77	0.30%
J: Information and Communication	18,263	4.70%	-909	-4.70%
F: Construction	17,081	4.40%	-9	-0.10%
H: Transportation and Storage	15,298	3.90%	986	6.90%
O: Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	10,127	2.60%	234	2.40%
R: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	8,147	2.10%	-59	-0.70%
S: Other Service Activities	7,909	2.00%	119	1.50%
L: Real Estate Activities	6,425	1.70%	-238	-3.60%
E: Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	5,018	1.30%	1,061	26.80%
K: Financial and Insurance Activities	4,510	1.20%	-82	-1.80%
A: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,891	0.50%	-423	-18.30%
D: Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	1,623	0.40%	161	11.00%
B: Mining and Quarrying	307	0.10%	6	2.00%

[2] https://public.tableau.com/views/OxfordshireLocalSkillsDashboard/Industries?%3AshowVizHome=no

5 ECONOMIC POLICY & STRATEGIC REVIEW

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 It is important to understand the economic development aims and aspirations of local stakeholders, as these set the context for, and are also key drivers of, the OSSCEP.

5.1.2 For this reason, a review has been undertaken of the planning policy and economic development strategies of the administrative bodies local to the Project. Documents which are relevant for the Project's OSSCEP are listed below, followed by the key relevant policies and messages from these documents.

5.2 National Policy

EN-1 (Overarching National Policy Statement for energy – 2024)

5.2.1 There are 6 National Policy Statements for Energy, however EN-1 (Overarching National Policy Statement for energy) and EN-3 (National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure) are most relevant to the Botley West Solar Farm OSSCEP. Both were updated in January 2024.

Table 5.1: Summary of Relevant NPS Policy and Consideration in OSSCEP

Summary of Relevant NPS Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
When considering the potential effects of a project, Applicants should consider "matters such as employment" (para 4.3.4)	Employment effects considered in detail in Socio-economics ES chapter and re-iterated in section 3.2 of this report
When considering socio-economic impacts, Applicants should consider "the creation of jobs and training opportunities. Applicants may wish to provide information on the sustainability of the jobs created, including where they will help to develop the skills needed for the UK's transition to Net Zero" (para 5.13.4)	Considered in section 3.3 the summary jobs created and also highlights that almost 50% of the jobs directly relate to the upskilling of Net Zero jobs
In regards to the Secretary pf State decision making, they may wish to include a requirement that "specifies the approval by the local authority of an employment and skills plan detailing arrangements to promote local employment and skills development opportunities, including apprenticeships, education, engagement with local schools and colleges and training programmes to be enacted." (para 5.13.12)	The entirety of this document is an Employment and Skills Plan

EN-3 (National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure – 2024)

5.2.2 EN-3 makes no specific reference to skill development, training, employment or jobs.

NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework – 2024)

5.2.3 The NPPF makes no relevant reference to skill development, training, employment, or jobs provision.

NPPG (National Planning Policy Guidance – Renewable and low carbon energy - 2023)

5.2.4 The NPPG gives practical guidance on a number of planning specific issues for local policy makers and Applicants. RPS have reviewed the most relevant NPPG to the BWSF, which is on “Renewable and low carbon energy”.

Table 5.2: Summary of Relevant NPPG Policy and Consideration in OSSCEP

Summary of Relevant NPPGS Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
The NPPG states that “Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses.”	GVA contributions from both direct and indirect jobs which would include multiplier effects from business supply chains considered in **Error! Reference source not found.**.

5.3 Regional Policy

Energy Strategy – 2015 to 2020 [Oxfordshire County Council]

5.3.1 The Oxfordshire County Council Energy Strategy is broadly focussed on energy operation, usage and maintenance of OCC.

Table 5.3: Summary of Relevant Energy Strategy Oxfordshire County Council

Summary of Relevant OCC Energy Strategy Plan Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
Objective 2 is about "Make use of renewable technologies where economically viable to reduce risk of supply, reduce costs and generate income to partially offset remaining costs"	The Oxfordshire County Council's Energy Strategy is focussed on administrative internal usage and emphasises that "reducing the overall county emissions is outside the scope of this strategy but highlights the importance of continuing to work in partnership with others on the transition to a low carbon economy". The Applicant had already contacted OCC and will continue to engage with them.

Climate Action Overview – 2022 to 2023 [Oxfordshire County Council]

5.3.2 The Oxfordshire County Council Climate Action Overview is broadly focussed on how the OCC can respond to the climate emergency and become a climate active council. There are no specific objectives or goals.

Table 5.4: Summary of Relevant Climate Action Overview Oxfordshire County Council

Summary of Relevant OCC Climate Action Overview Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
There are no specific objectives, however the Climate Action Overview promotes "Partnerships and strategy". The report references "the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP)… a partnership set up by Oxford City Council bringing together universities, hospitals, councils, large businesses, and communities to support the city in its journey to net zero carbon emissions"	As this is not an adopted policy, the Applicant has not explicitly considered this within their OSSCEP. However, the Applicant is open to building upon their partnerships to contribute to Oxfordshire's net zero carbon ambitious.

5.3.3 The below 3 OxLEP policies are not officially adopted policies but are strategic guidance that are "aligned to the Government's Industrial Strategy and the Clean Growth Strategy [and will]…feed into…[OxLEP's] emerging Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)".

Oxfordshire Skills Strategy – 2020 [Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership]

5.3.4 The Oxfordshire Skills Strategy discusses specific skills needed for the future.

Table 5.5: Summary of Relevant OSS Policy and Consideration in OSSCEP

Summary of Relevant OSS Delivery Plan Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
OSS Priority 1 is about "Supporting the reform of vocational and technical skills provision, which includes promoting Apprenticeships and T Levels offers"	The Applicant has outlined their vocational jobs and training provision in more detail in section 6. It covers apprenticeship, traineeships and even work placements to ensure a steady pipeline across generations of future renewable energy employees.
OSS Priority 5 is about "Business Skills Provision and Support" – it discusses the need to build skills "needed by the zero-carbon economy"	The Applicant has outlined their collaborative approach by ensuring they compound already existing Oxfordshire efforts to help re-skill and upskill people into the zero-carbon economy.
OSS Priority 6 is about "Ensure training and re-skilling provision in identified priority sectors" including "high level and specialist skills"	The Applicant has begun to engage with local Oxfordshire delivery organisations to partner to help facilitate their solar skill training Projects.

Oxfordshire Energy Strategy – 2020[Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership]

5.3.5 The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy outlines Oxfordshire's strategic framework for securing smart, clean energy infrastructure in Oxfordshire.

Table 5.6: Summary of Relevant Oxfordshire Energy Strategy Policy and Consideration in OSSCEP

Summary of Relevant OES Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
The OES aims to create "over 11,000 [energy related] new jobs by 2030"	The Applicant's proposal significantly contributes to this by providing almost 3,000 jobs by 2027.
The OES aims to "provide a platform to bring top-class skills for a zero-carbon future…[by helping] to inspire young people and create career pathways in the low-carbon sector, as well as enhancing entrepreneurial attitudes"	The Applicant's proposal directly relates to his as it will promote net zero skills development amongst young people via roles (that young people can do) directly related to renewable solar technology as outlined in section 3.3.

(Oxfordshire Energy Strategy Delivery Plan 2019/20) [Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership]

5.3.6 The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy Delivery Plan, builds upon the OES but outlines implementation and delivery of such goals.

Table 5.7: Summary of Relevant OESDP Policy and Consideration in OSSCEP

Summary of Relevant OES Delivery Plan Policy requirement	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
Under their "Growing the Low Carbon Economy" theme, there is an ambition to "Develop high skills workforce for the renewable energy sectors and for sustainable construction [ES50]"	The Applicant has begun to engage with local Oxfordshire organisations to partner to help facilitate their solar skill training Projects.

5.4 Local Policy

Table 5.8: Summary of local planning policy relevant to this chapter

Policy	Key provisions	How and where considered in the OSSCEP
West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted 2018)		
Objective C07	Supports sustainable economic growth which adds value to the local economy, improves the balance between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local employment opportunities…improves local skills and work readiness.	Section 3 outlines employment opportunities, skills, and economic output.
Vale of Whitehorse Local Plan 2031 (adopted 2019)		
Core Policy 1	Building a resilient, responsive, and competitive economy.	Section 3 outlines employment opportunities, skills, and economic output.
Cherwell Local Plan 2031 (adopted 2015)		
Strategic Objective 1	To facilitate economic growth and employment and a more diverse local economy.	Considered in section 3.2 and 3.3 the economic impacts of job creation associated with this development.
Strategic Objective 3	To help disadvantaged areas, support an increase in skills and innovation.	The skills training that will occur due to this development has been outlined in section 6.3
Cassington Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (adopted 2020)		
	This policy makes no specific reference to skill development, training, employment, or jobs pertaining to proposals or specifically renewable energy infrastructure.	N/A
Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (adopted 2018)		
ENV6	New developments should ensure that Eynsham continues to offer a range of employment opportunities.	The employment effects of the project are discussed section in 3.2 and 3.3.
ENP10	New developments shall support the existing and potential scale of local employment in the Eynsham area.	The employment effects of the project are discussed in section 3.2 and 3.3.
Woodstock Neighbourhood Development Plan 2031 (adopted 2023)		
N/A	This policy makes no specific reference to skill development, training, employment, or jobs pertaining to proposals or specifically renewable energy infrastructure.	N/A

5.5 Policy Summary

5.5.1 Planning policies and economic development strategies relevant to the Project exist at the national, regional, and local levels.

5.5.2 The Oxfordshire Skills Strategy, Energy Strategy and Energy Strategy Delivery Plan are comprehensive strategic policy documents created by OxLEP (the study area's regional Local Enterprise Partnership). They are not officially adopted policies but are strategic guidance that are "aligned to the Government's Industrial Strategy and the Clean Growth Strategy [and will]… feed into…[OxLEP's] emerging Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)". They address how to achieve clean economic growth, whist ensuring there is a diverse pipeline of skilled talent to enable this green transformation.

5.5.3 The relevant Local Plans, as listed in **Table 5.8**: , for the area identify renewable energy as a target sector and aim to promote opportunities for the local workforce and supply chain, attempting to promote high quality and diverse job opportunities and reduce out-commuting. The relevant neighbourhood plans for the area stress the need to protect and enhance community infrastructure and opportunities for local businesses. Promoting skills development is a common theme across all local and neighbourhood plans. The OSSCEP is therefore in accordance with planning policy and supports achievement of the aims which the relevant Local Plans identify relating to SSCE.

6 OPPORTUNITIES

6.2 Overview

6.2.1 This section sets out potential activities which the Applicant could pursue as part of programme of work relating to SSCE.

6.2.2 The opportunities described here reflect the likely impacts of the Project and respond to the local context, as set out in previous chapters. They are an illustrative long-list, and will be modified, refined and agreed through development of a full SSCE plan, which will be secured via a Requirement included in the DCO for the Project. The SSCE plan will be subject to approval by the relevant planning authorities – West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.

6.3 Skills

6.3.1 As set out in **Table 6.1**, a variety of skills and disciplines are required for the successful delivery of the Project. Interventions relating to relevant skills training and education could benefit local people while also promoting the supply of an appropriately skilled workforce to deliver the project.

6.3.2 The Applicant has already identified a number of stakeholders for potential skills and educational collaboration, and has made initial contact with many. This programme of engagement will be continued and expanded post DCO consent in order to identify priority interventions relating to skills and training for inclusion in the full SSCE plan. A list of potential stakeholders is presented in **Table** .

Table 6.1: Potential Stakeholders for Skills Collaboration

Stakeholder	Stakeholder Type	Contacted to Date?
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	Facilitator	Yes
Thames Valley Skills Unit	Facilitator	Yes
Bicester Construction Skills Centre	Facilitator	No
Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce	Facilitator	Yes
Abingdon and Witney College	Training Institution	Yes
Oxford Brooks University	Training Institution	No
University of Oxford	Training Institution	Yes
Oxfordshire Jobcentre Plus	Facilitator	Yes
Oxfordshire Careers Hub	Facilitator	Yes
Net Zero Skills Hub, AWC	Training Institution	Yes
Primary Schools	Training Institution	No
Secondary Schools	Training Institution	No

Opportunity 1: Apprenticeships

6.3.3 Apprenticeships can help fulfil labour and skills requirements for employers in a cost-effective way, while also providing paid employment, training, and potential pathways into employment for apprentices, who are often young people, which helps to sustain the pipeline of future talent.

6.3.4 Oxfordshire Apprenticeships (part of OxLEP) aims to promote the growth of apprenticeships by supporting the engagement of all interested parties through information and guidance. Although not an exhaustive list, Apprenticeship providers in the area include:

a. City of Oxford College (Activate Apprenticeship)
b. Abingdon and Witney College
c. University of Oxford

6.3.5 In developing the full SSCE plan, the Applicant will consider a programme to promote apprenticeships during the various phases of the Project.

Opportunity 2: Other Workforce Training

6.3.6 The Applicant will also consider other interventions to support the training of employees and workers on the Project.

6.3.7 The intent would be to support the achievement of vocational qualifications (e.g. BTEC, City and Guilds, NVQ, HNC) at various levels which are relevant to the delivery of the Project.

6.3.8 Engagement with potential Tier 1[3] contractors and local training providers (for example, via a Skills Forum organised and operated by the Applicant) could highlight gaps in the skills required to deliver the Project, and therefore identify specific courses which could be particularly relevant.

6.3.9 The Applicant is already a member of SolarEnergy UK, an established trade association working for and representing the entire solar and energy storage value chain.

6.3.10 The Applicant will leverage their membership by accessing resources, best practice, programmes and events aimed at attracting talent into the solar industry available to members of SolarEnergy UK.

Opportunity 3: STEM Education and Careers

6.3.11 There is currently poor take-up of STEM subjects within schools and colleges and the UK's workforce of engineers is aging[4]. This implies a potential

[3] Tier 1 contractors are the highest classification that represents the largest building contractor companies who typically have an annual turnover of £500+; Tier 2 contractors typically have £100m to £499 annual turnover and Tier 3 contractors typically have £10m to £99m in annual turnover

[4] The UK Government's Industrial Strategy (2017) stressed the need to address skills shortages in STEM subjects and disciplines.

shortage of the technical and professional skills required to deliver the Project and other large infrastructure projects in the future.

6.3.12 The Oxfordshire Skills Strategy and Oxfordshire Energy Strategy both emphasise the need for specialist skills that will help to build the zero-carbon economy.

6.3.13 The Applicant will investigate the potential for a programme of activities which promote STEM education and careers. This could be targeted at primary school pupils, secondary school pupils, college students and / or other young people in the area.

6.3.14 Given the Project's timescale and phases, some of these target individuals could ultimately become part of the Project's workforce. However, the key aim should be to inform and inspire young people about STEM careers more generally.

6.3.15 Initiatives could include project staff volunteering to run interactive workshops or give talks. The first step would be engagement with local schools and relevant facilitators (e.g. the Local Authorities) to establish the need and design appropriate initiatives.

6.3.16 Site visits during the construction period could be an effective way to educate and inspire students, The Applicant will also consider establishing a 'project hub' or some kind of facility at the project site(s)[5] to provide space and resources to deliver STEM initiatives. Inspiration could be taken from Eden Renewables, who have a developed education programme that sees each solar farm development ring-fencing funds per year to fund solar education. They also offer site visits, STEM webinars that bring industry professionals directly in classrooms and engage with teachers.

6.3.17 The Applicant will develop a programme of activities in collaboration with local schools which promotes STEM education and careers. School visits with small-group talks and presentations, workshops on construction skills, operating skills and electricity market-related skills. Once the solar farm is built, site visits with demonstrations of key parts of the site, information boards, technical descriptions of the NGET substation site. Science walks, nature walks and environmental issues walks can be used to inspire pupils to work in all sectors of the green economy. The Applicant will consider setting up visitor and education programming near the for educational visits and technical exhibitions. The Applicant will participate in Careers Fairs and Jobs Fairs.

6.3.18 The Applicant has already had discussions with OxLEP regarding potential collaboration on skills development programmes.

6.4 Employment

6.4.1 The expected employment benefits of the Project are shown in Section 2.2. This section will discuss opportunities to maximise these employment benefits for local people and disadvantaged groups.

[5] Illustrative designs have already been created for this sustainable outdoor educational space for visiting groups

Opportunity 4: Local Recruitment

6.4.2 The Applicant will investigate measures to promote take up of jobs generated by the Project by local people.

6.4.3 The starting point will be engagement with Local Authorities and Job Centre Plus, in order to tap into existing local employment support networks. The local Job Centre Plus offices are identified in **Table 6.2** below.

6.4.4 The Applicant has already held meetings with Jame Gilpin, DWP's Oxfordshire Employer Engagement Manager. Jame Gilpin will assist the Applicant in the delivery of this ESP, through the collaboration of all local Jobcentres (Oxford, Banbury, Bicester, Witney) with an aim of delivering large scale local employment and skills initiatives recruitment.

6.4.5 Jame Gilpin will also support the Applicant in maximising the diversity of the Applicant's workforce.

6.4.6 There may be community and voluntary sector groups which specialise in local recruitment, and placing job adverts with local private sector recruitment companies will also support this initiative.

Table 6.2: Details of Local Job Brokerage Agencies

Organisation	Address	Contact Details
Witney Jobcentre Plus	2 Rivers Trading Estate Station Lane Witney Oxfordshire, OX28 4JA	0800 169 0190
Banbury Jobcentre Plus	Crown Buildings Southam Road Banbury Oxfordshire, OX16 2EX	0800 055 6688
Abingdon Jobcentre	38-44 Stert St, Abingdon, OX14 3QS	0800 055 6688

6.4.7 It may be useful to locate relevant recruitment personnel and resources on-site once construction starts.

6.4.8 For example, the Applicant will explore opportunities in relation to hiring a Skills and Employment manager at the site responsible for local outreach, and vacancies could be displayed at the site.

Opportunity 5: Maximising Diversity of the Workforce

6.4.9 The Applicant could introduce initiatives to maximise the diversity of the workforce. Groups which could be the target of this measure could include:

- workers of a certain gender, ethnicity or age (e.g. 16-24 year olds or older workers);

- disadvantaged or under-represented groups, women, for example, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders or disabled people.

6.4.10 There is a significant number of NEET people in North Oxfordshire, Banbury and Bicester. Jame Gilpin is a Programmes Executive who works at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Oxfordshire Job Centre Plus. He is an influential figure in the delivery of employment and skills training within Oxfordshire. He will assist the Applicant in devising programmes and initiatives to target this group for the construction phase.

6.4.11 The most relevant target groups for this measure would be identified through consultation and research post-consent. Measures could include:

- ensuring that jobs are communicated to target groups, including identifying and working with specialist job brokerage agencies; and
- working with job support and training providers who operate programmes aimed at getting people into work (for example, young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training may require pre-employment, basic skills training and work placements).

6.4.12 Any measures adopted will comply with employment law. It will be important to report on the demographic profile of Applicants for new jobs and the workforce. This would likely involve regular reporting, for example on age, ethnicity, gender, and disability, with data to be collected through a voluntary survey.

6.5 Supply Chain

6.5.1 The Applicant will take measures to maximise benefits to local businesses from spending on goods and services during each phase of the Project.

6.5.2 The Applicant has built strong relationships with OxLEP, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and Oxford Low Carbon Hub. The Applicant will use these facilitators to make connections with local suppliers.

6.5.3 OxLEP have said they will help the Applicant to organise and publicise supplier fairs in order to ensure the Applicant procure as much as possible locally.

6.5.4 The Applicant is already receiving approaches via LinkedIn from potential local suppliers. Post DCO submission, the Applicant will have a local supplier contact form section on the BWSF website to collect interest with the aim for potential procurement.

Opportunity 6: Business networking and support

6.5.5 The Applicant will work with local partners to communicate opportunities for purchasing and contracts arising from the Project to local businesses.

6.5.6 This will include building on existing relationships with: Solar Energy UK and Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce as well as identifying other potential partners including the Local Authorities.

Opportunity 7: Procurement Strategy

6.5.7 The procurement strategy for the Project will also reflect the aim of maximising benefits to local businesses, balanced against ensuring competitive delivery of the Project.

6.5.8 As well as early engagement with potential contractors via suppler information days, contracting opportunities will be publicised so as to maximise local reach (for example, using social media and industry publications).

6.5.9 The Applicant will work with Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce to provide a list of local companies who can contribute to the supply chain of the BWSF.

7 DELIVERY

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This section describes how the SSCE plan could be delivered, including potential roles, responsibilities and timelines.

7.2 Organisational Framework

7.2.1 Figure 1 shows a potential organisational framework for developing and delivering the SSCE work programme post-DCO consent.

7.2.2 The programme would be driven forward by a SSCE Function Lead, overseen and governed by a steering group which would include senior members of PVDP's management team.

7.2.3 The SSCE work programme would then break down into a number of activities or workstreams (some or all of which could align with the opportunities described in Section 5). Each activity would have a named lead (which could be the SSCE Function Lead), and internal partners (from within the PVDP project team) to support delivery. External partners and stakeholders (for example, Local Authorities, education and training providers, job brokerage agencies, Chambers of Commerce) could be engaged as appropriate, as their detailed local knowledge and experience will be critical to success. Additional resources such as professional support, capital funding or physical facilities may be relevant.

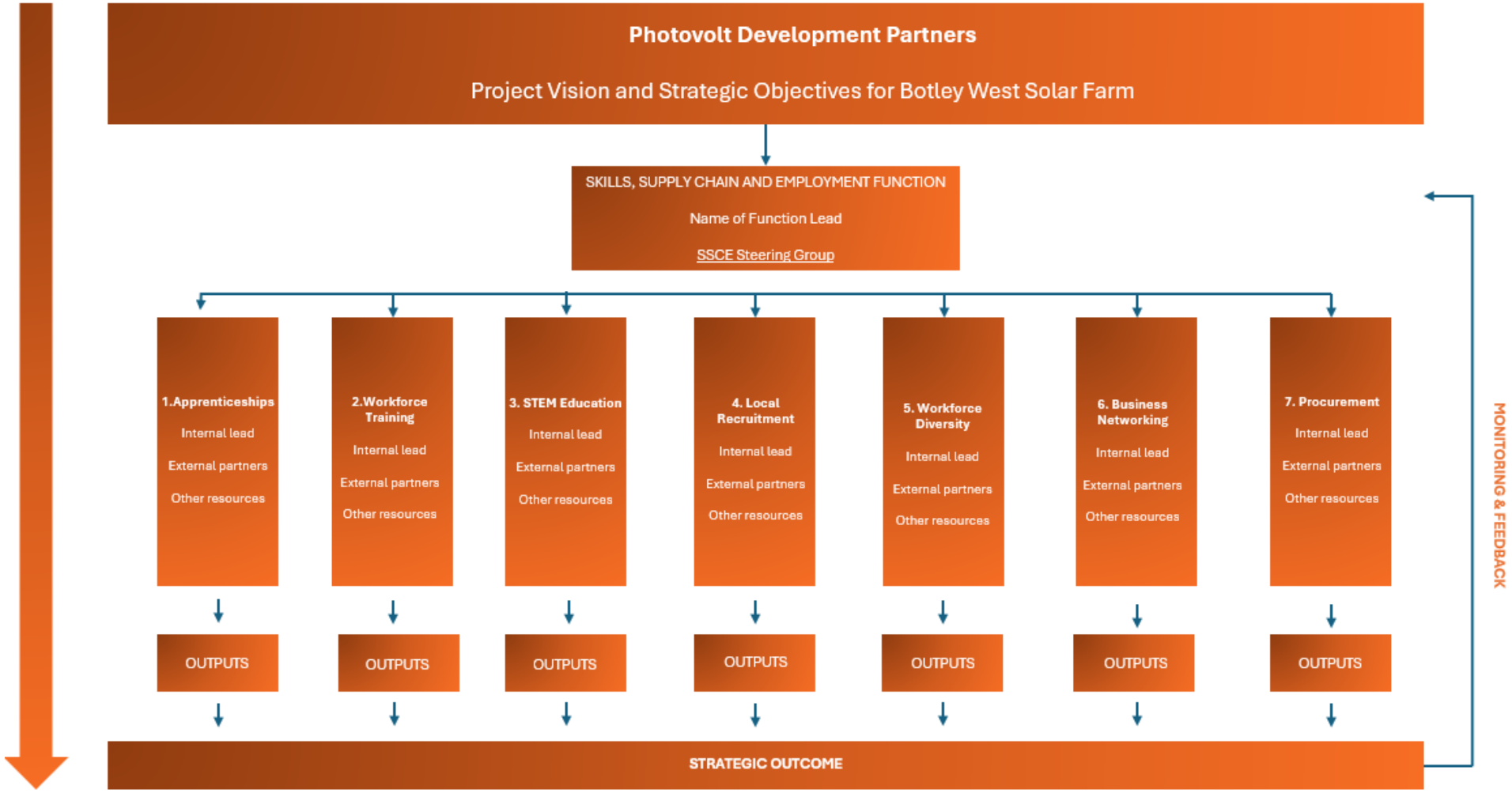
7.2.4 If successful, each activity will result in achievement of the outputs and, ultimately, the outcomes identified within the SSCE plan. A monitoring system will measure outputs and outcomes, and reporting will be undertaken. Lessons learned will be fed back in order to shape and improve SSCE work programme over time.

7.3 Internal Joint Working

7.3.1 Development and delivery of the SSCE work programme will require joint working between various parts of the PVDP's project team. Important internal partners will include the commercial team, the community engagement team, HR/personnel, and project/programme management.

7.3.2 There could be value in incorporating the SSCE work programme into a wider PVDP community benefits or social value programme. This would allow all the benefits of the Project to be managed and measured in a coherent, effective and consistent way. Other benefits of the Project are described in the Planning Statement, ES and relate to access, biodiversity, heritage, soils and water quality.

Figure 1: Indicative Organisational Framework for Delivery



7.4 Engagement with External Stakeholders

7.4.1 Working with external stakeholders will be fundamental to the success of the SSCE programme.

7.4.2 An initial list of relevant partners is set out in **Table 6.1**. The Applicant has already made contact with a number of them (and will continue to engage with them as well as others), including training providers, local Chambers of Commerce and Local Authorities.

7.4.3 There may in addition be potential to engage with local residents and community groups on issues relating to SSCE, building on the consultation undertaken and during Project development and preparation of the DCO.

7.5 Summary of Engagement to Date

7.5.1 In November 2022, PVDP & RPS held an initial meeting with Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive of OxLEP, to discuss the Oxfordshire local economy, employment market, and potential suppliers. Mr. N Tipple provided valuable insights on how OxLEP support large developments and recommended collaboration with their specialist skills team, OxLEP Skills, led by Cat Armstrong. This meeting led to subsequent engagements via Microsoft Teams with Ms. Armstrong to further explore how the Proposed Development can help boost Oxfordshire's employment, upskilling and make use of local suppliers. Ms. C Armstrong provided PVDP with a comprehensive overview of the services offered by OxLEP Skills, utilizing various case studies to illustrate their success in organizing job fairs and supplier events, which PVDP intends to replicate.

7.5.2 Additionally, throughout 2023, PVDP & RPS conducted a series of meetings with representatives from Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant District Councils during the initial consultation phase in September 2022, where discussions focused on local skills development and employment. PVDP held three meetings with Robert Courts, MP for Witney, concentrating on the project's economic impact on his constituents and their potential involvement. Furthermore, Ms. C Armstrong facilitated introductions with key contacts, including the Oxfordshire Careers Hub, the Careers and Enterprise Company, and the British Association of Supported Employment.

7.5.3 In early 2024, Ms. C Armstrong introduced PVDP to Sarah Marlowe of the No Limits Programme, James Gilpin from JobCentre, and leaders from the Oxfordshire Construction Training Group and Abingdon and Witney College. These introductions aimed to foster collaboration on local employment and skills development. PVDP also engaged in discussions with Mark Pope of Co-Train regarding Flexi-Job Apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship Levy as a means to support local SMEs and apprenticeships. Further meetings were held with Steven Newman, Economic Development Officer at Cherwell District Council, Elaine North from OCC, and Nikki Wakefield from Oxfordshire Careers Hub to enhance local employment initiatives.

7.6 Timelines

7.6.1 **Table 7.1** sets out a timeline for developing and delivering the SSCE plan.

Table 7.1: Timelines for Developing and Delivering the SSCE Plan

Key Milestone	Actions
Q4 2024 - After DCO application submission	• Continue to engage with local stakeholders to strengthen links and to identify preferred SSCE workstreams, using OSSCEP as a basis for discussion.
Q4 2025 - Assuming consents granted	• Develop OSSCEP into a full SSCE plan, confirming objectives and activities to be pursued. Discharge requirement in the DCO for the SSCE plan to be approved by the relevant planning authorities. • Include SSCE requirements in the ITT for contractors, if/as relevant. • Early SSCE activities in progress, e.g. networking and market information events to publicise opportunities to local businesses.
Q1 2026 - Earliest start point for construction	• Continue delivery of early SSCE activities, e.g. recruitment of apprentices and establishment of training and schools programme. • Work with contractor(s) to plan how any SSEC requirements in contracts will be delivered and monitored during the construction period. • Once construction has started, the SSCE activities and outputs should be fully in delivery.

7.6.2 It is suggested that once the full SSCE plan is finalised, the document is reviewed every six months, so it can be refined and adjusted as the Project moves towards its construction and operational phase.

8 Monitoring And Feedback

8.1 Monitoring

8.1.1 It is important that the objectives and activities of the SSCE plan are effectively monitored, measured and reported. This enables an understanding of whether the plan is achieving its goals and contributing to the over-arching vision, and provides feedback accordingly.

8.1.2 A monitoring and reporting plan will be developed as part of the full SSCE plan.

8.1.3 Effective performance monitoring will be achieved by following the methods below:

d. Developing specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART) performance indicators;

e. Aiming for quality over quantity of performance indicators;

f. Ensuring performance monitoring mechanisms are consistent with the stated objectives of the OSSCEP;

g. Ensuring performance indicators are flexible and updateable; and

h. Scoping out the practicality of how data will be collected before defining measurable targets

8.1.4 **Table 8.1** sets out some illustrative outputs or indicators which could be relevant to the Project's SSCE plan. Outputs are the tangible results of pursuing the specific opportunities of the Project.

8.1.5 **Table 8.1** also sets out illustrative outcomes, which are the longer-term results of implementing the SSCE plan. They include changes to the local community, environment and workforce that the activities and initiatives aim to achieve.

8.2 Potential Outputs and Outcomes

Table 8.1: Potential Measurable Outputs and Outcomes of the SSCE

Opportunity Area	Opportunity	Potential Outputs	Potential Outcomes
Skills	**Opportunity 1**: Apprenticeships	• Number of apprenticeships funded / taken-up	• Reduction in proportion of population with no qualifications
	Opportunity 2: Other Training	• Number of relevant vocational qualifications achieved	• Reduction in proportion of population with no qualifications
	Opportunity 3: STEM Education and Careers	• Number of schools engaged • Number of events delivered • Number of pupils participating in events • Increased awareness of STEM careers	• GCSE attainment in participating schools • Take up of STEM subjects in further education
Employment	**Opportunity 4:** Local Recruitment	• Proportion of workforce employed from the local area	• Increase employment levels in local area
	Opportunity 5: Maximising Diversity of the Workforce	• Proportion of workforce employed from target groups • Number of employees who are happy with working environment/culture	• Increase employment levels for target groups
Supply Chain	**Opportunity 6:** Business Networking and Support	• Number of supplier events delivered	• Increase in turnover of local businesses
	Opportunity 7: Procurement Strategy	• Number/value of contracts secured by local businesses	• Increase in turnover of local businesses