



**THE DROVES**  
SOLAR FARM

# The Drovers Solar Farm

---

Preliminary Employment and Skills Strategy (PESS)

April 2025



# Contents

|           |   |           |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Introduction</b>                               | <b>3</b>  |
|           | Purpose of this document                          | 3         |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Key issues and priorities</b>                  | <b>5</b>  |
|           | Policy review                                     | 5         |
|           | Engagement to date                                | 5         |
|           | Local labour market context                       | 6         |
|           | Key themes  | 7         |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Opportunities created by the Scheme</b>        | <b>13</b> |
|           | Construction and decommissioning phase            | 13        |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Emerging employment and skills initiatives</b> | <b>17</b> |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Next steps</b>                                 | <b>19</b> |

# 1. Introduction

## Purpose of this document

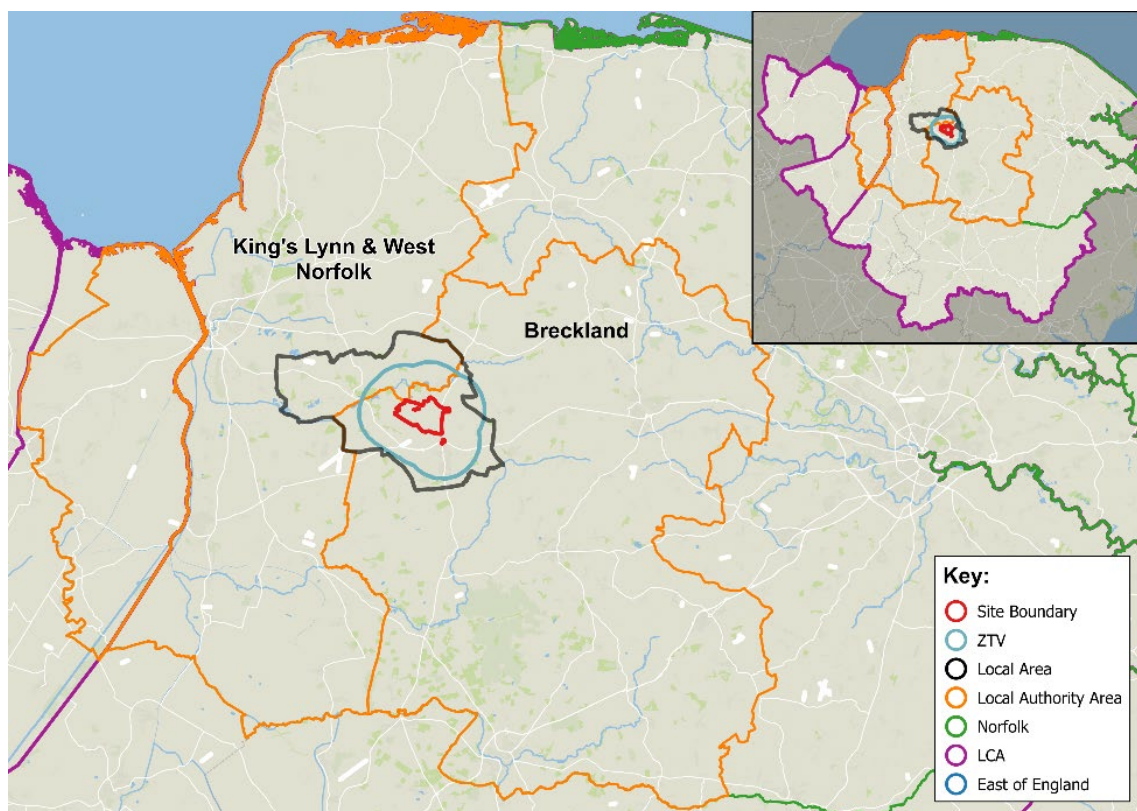
- 1.1 This Preliminary Employment and Skills Strategy ('PESS') has been prepared on behalf of The Droves Solar Farm Ltd ("the Applicant") and relates to the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Droves Solar Farm ('the Scheme'). The Scheme comprises the construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station and associated development including a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), a Customer Substation and Grid Connection Infrastructure including a new National Grid Substation. The Scheme would allow for the generation and export of over 50MW Alternating Current (AC) of renewable energy, connecting into the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) overhead line that passes through the Site.
- 1.2 The PESS outlines the initial themes and potential employment and skills initiatives that could be implemented as part of the Scheme. The aim of the strategy is to generate local employment and skills opportunities, ensuring that local businesses and workers benefit during both the construction and operational phases. Since the operational phase is expected to last 60 years, flexibility will be key to responding to changing needs. Ongoing engagement with King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Breckland Council, and Norfolk County Council will be essential to ensure the initiatives continue to deliver meaningful benefits to the local community.
- 1.3 While an employment and skills strategy of this nature is not formally required to support an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO), it reflects good practice and the Applicant's ambitions. Following the PESS, a more detailed strategy, the outline Employment and Skills Strategy (OESS), will be submitted alongside the DCO Application. The OESS will include an action plan outlining how commitments will be delivered before being finalised in the Employment and Skills Strategy (ESS). The final ESS will then be approved before construction begins and secured through a requirement in the DCO, should the Secretary of State grant consent. Breckland Council will be the key partner in developing, securing, and delivering the Strategy, with important contributions from Norfolk County Council and King's Lynn & West Norfolk Councils through ongoing consultation and collaboration.
- 1.4 The Site is located in an area of countryside to the north of Swaffham and south-east of Kings Lynn. Throughout this document, an analysis of the current employment and skills context will be set out using the following study areas as set out in **Figure 1.1** and **Table 1.1**.

**Table 1.1 Study areas**

| Geographical study area | Definition   |
|-------------------------|--|
| The Site                | Area consisting of the Solar PV Site, Associated Development, Ancillary Infrastructure and Highway Works and any other element or component that forms part of the Scheme.   |
| Local Area              | The Local Area comprises of the following Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) surrounding the Site:<br><br>King's Lynn and West Norfolk 012D, Breckland 002C, Breckland 007A, Breckland 007B, Breckland 007C, Breckland 007D, Breckland 007E. |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) | A 3km radius from the Scoping Study Area, aligning with the ZTV - the maximum area of assessment for landscape and visual impact within Chapter 6 of the PEIR: Landscape and Visual.   |
| Local Authority Districts            | King's Lynn & West Norfolk, and Breckland. This is used to assess provision of education, skills and training. The skills effect could be assessed at a wider geographical area in the final ES if feedback from statutory consultees indicates that this would be more appropriate.                                       |
| Labour Catchment Area (LCA)          | A 60-minute travel time to the Site, as defined by the Local Authorities, intersects more than half of the area within the following local authorities: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, South Holland, Breckland, Broadland, King's Lynn and West Norfolk, North Norfolk, South Norfolk, Mid Suffolk, West Suffolk, Norwich. |
| Sub-regional                         | Norfolk, mostly used for context   |
| Regional                             | East of England, mostly used for context.  |
| National                             | England, mostly used for context.  |

Figure 1.1 Study Areas



## 2. Key issues and priorities

2.1 A number of key themes have been developed within this Strategy. These have been identified through a review of national, regional, and local policy, analysis of baseline socio-economic data and engagement with local stakeholders. The emerging themes include:

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
|  <p>Low proportions of residents who have achieved the highest levels of qualifications</p> |  <p>Building on Breckland and King's Lynn &amp; West Norfolk's apprenticeship strength</p> |  <p>Young residents face a number of barriers accessing economic opportunities</p> |  <p>A strong local skills base in technical and trade occupations</p> |
|--|---|---|--|

### Policy review

2.2 A thorough review of national, regional, and local policy as part of its work on the Scheme. The documents that have been reviewed include:

- Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023. Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1);
- Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2021. Green Jobs Taskforce report;
- UK Parliament, 2023. Green skills for education and employment;
- Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, 2022. Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy;
- Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, 2024. Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan;
- Norfolk County Council, 2021. Better Together for Norfolk. Norfolk County Council Strategy (2021–2025);
- Breckland Council, 2024. Breckland Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028;
- Breckland Council, 2023. Future Breckland – Thriving People and Places;
- Breckland Council, 2022. Future Breckland Evidence Encyclopaedia;
- Breckland Council, 2024. Breckland Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment;
- Breckland Council, 2017. Breckland Employment Growth Study Update Report;
- Breckland Council, 2024. Breckland Skills Plan 2024;
- Breckland Country Council, 2023. Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan (2023);
- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, 2024. King's Lynn & West Norfolk Draft Economic Vision and Strategy;
- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, 2016. King's Lynn & West Norfolk Development Management Policies Plan; and
- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, 2017. King's Lynn & West Norfolk Employment Land Review.

### Engagement to date

2.3 This PESS has been prepared in response to the Scoping Opinion issued by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 18 December 2024 (Volume III, Appendix 2.2), which reflects Norfolk County Council's expectation for the Applicant to produce a Skills and Employment Strategy as part of the DCO process.

2.4 The Applicant is actively engaging with various stakeholders. To date, the Applicant has delivered multiple co-design workshops where matters related to employment and skills have been discussed. Since then, the

Applicant held a dedicated employment and skills workshop on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025, attended by several local authority officers, including:

- Skills and recruitment officer at Breckland Council;
- Senior Planner for King's Lynn & West Norfolk;
- NSIP lead for Norfolk County Council;
- Head of employment and skills at Norfolk County Council; and
- Principal planner at Norfolk County Council.

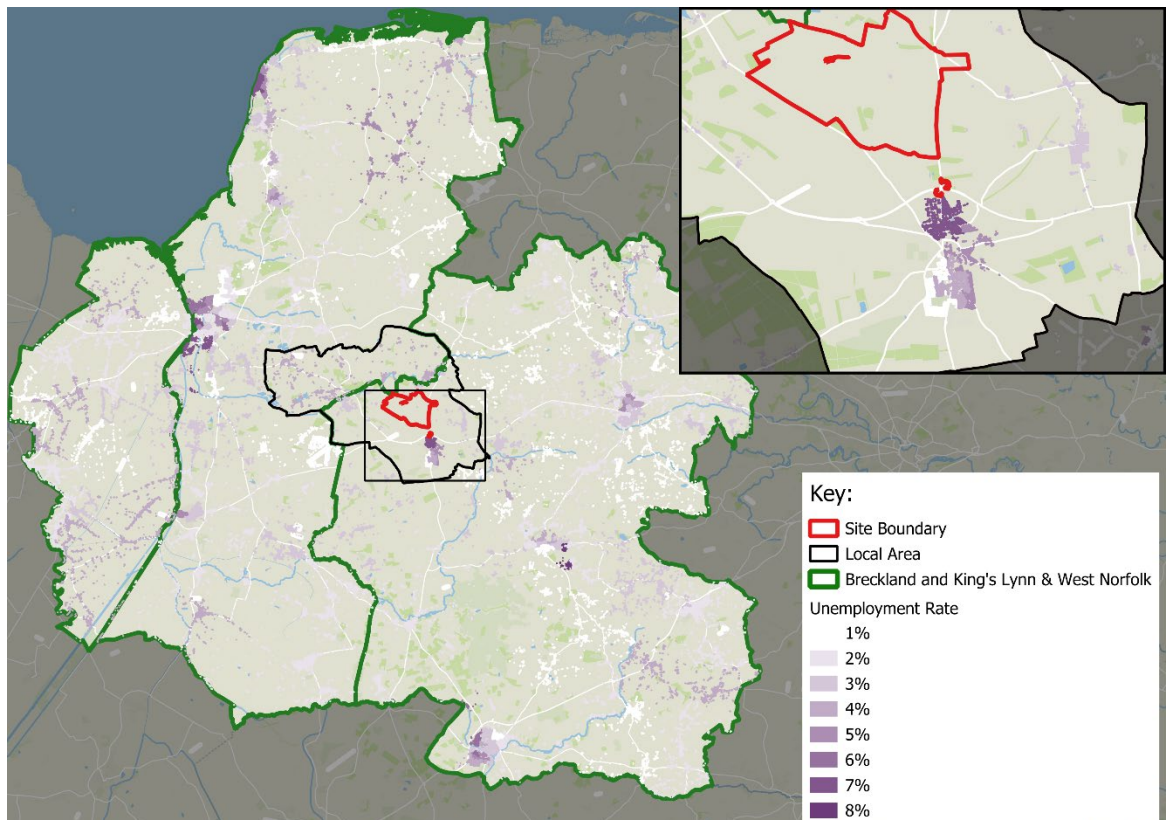
2.5 Feedback from the workshop was positive, with stakeholders expressing support for the approach adopted by the Applicant. The engagement also highlighted several key challenges and opportunities for the area, which have been reflected in the themes outlined below.

## Local labour market context

2.6 The Local Area experiences relatively high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity compared to surrounding geographies. As shown in **Figure 2.1**, unemployment is highly concentrated within the northern part of Swaffham.

**Figure 2.1 Unemployment in the Local Area is concentrated around Swaffham**

Unemployment across Breckland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk



© MapTiler © OpenStreetMap contributors

2.7 As shown in **Table 2.1**, the unemployment rate in the Local Area is broadly in line with the national average but is significantly higher when compared to Breckland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk. This suggests greater challenges in accessing or sustaining employment locally.

2.8 Economic inactivity is also a pressing issue, with the Local Area's inactivity rate standing at 21.6%, which is around four percentage points (p.p.) higher than the national average and five p.p. above the regional average.<sup>1</sup> This elevated level of inactivity is consistent across all age groups, indicating a broader structural issue affecting the local labour force. In contrast, Breckland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk show labour market performance more closely aligned with the Norfolk average, reinforcing the Local Area's relatively weaker employment outcomes.

**Table 2.1 Unemployment and economic inactivity rate for relevant study areas (2024)**

| Geography                  | Unemployment rate | Economic inactivity rate |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Local Area                 | 4.8%              | 21.6%                    |
| Breckland                  | 3.7%              | 17.9%                    |
| King's Lynn & West Norfolk | 3.9%              | 19.1%                    |
| Norfolk                    | 4.2%              | 18.2%                    |
| East                       | 4.2%              | 16.2%                    |
| England                    | 4.9%              | 17.3%                    |

Source: ONS, 2024. Census 2021: RM024 - Economic activity status by sex by age

## Key themes

2.9 This section outlines the preliminary research conducted to identify key employment and skills challenges in the Local Area. A more detailed evidence base, including further engagement, will be provided in the OESS as part of the DCO Application.

## Low proportions of residents who have achieved the highest levels of qualifications



2.10 The Local Area faces challenges around qualification attainment, with 24% of residents having no qualifications, compared to 20% nationally. In contrast, only 23% hold level 4 qualifications or above, below the national average of 27%.<sup>2</sup> As can be seen in **Figure 2.2**, Norfolk faces similar challenges; however, the Local Area exhibits a more pronounced version of this trend, with even lower rates of high-level qualification attainment and higher rates of residents with no qualifications.

2.11 The challenge that these factors pose is recognised across local policy documents; the draft Breckland Updated Local Plan (2024) notes, for example:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Economic Activity refers to people not in employment who have not been seeking work within the last 4 weeks and/or are unable to start work within the next 2 weeks. Source: ONS, 2024. Census 2021: RM024 - Economic activity status by sex by age

<sup>2</sup> ONS, 2024. Census 2021

<sup>3</sup> Breckland County Council, 2024. Draft Updated Local Plan

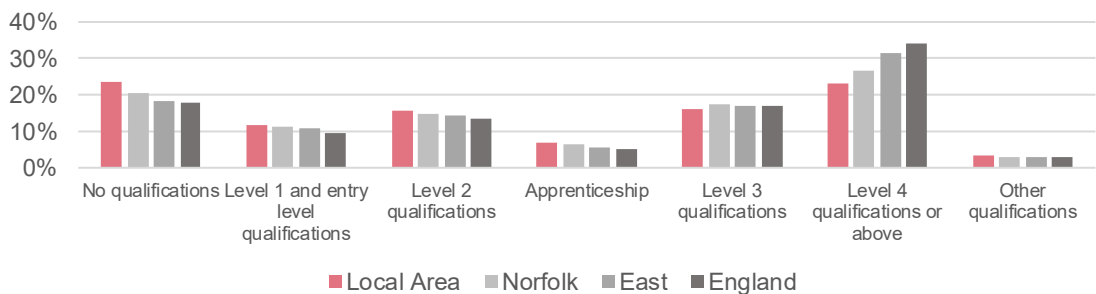
“Wages are relatively low in comparison with the national and regional averages. This is reflected through the lower level of qualifications of people in the District and the lower level of skills required by many of the available jobs.”

2.12 Engagement at the workshop highlighted that long-term health conditions and mental health challenges are limiting workforce participation, particularly among young people and those in more deprived areas. Strengthening adult basic skills—such as maths, English, and digital literacy—was identified as a key priority to support career progression and improve economic resilience.

2.13 Participants also raised concerns about capacity constraints in Further Education (FE), especially in construction and green skills. One proposed solution was to involve experienced industry professionals as associate lecturers. There is also a clear need to align skills development with the increasing demand for green skills, to support long-term employment opportunities in the low-carbon economy.

**Figure 2.2 The Local Area has a high proportion of residents who hold no qualifications**

Highest qualification achieved by geography (2021) (%)



Source: ONS, 2024. Census 2021.

## Building on Breckland and King’s Lynn & West Norfolk’s apprenticeship strength



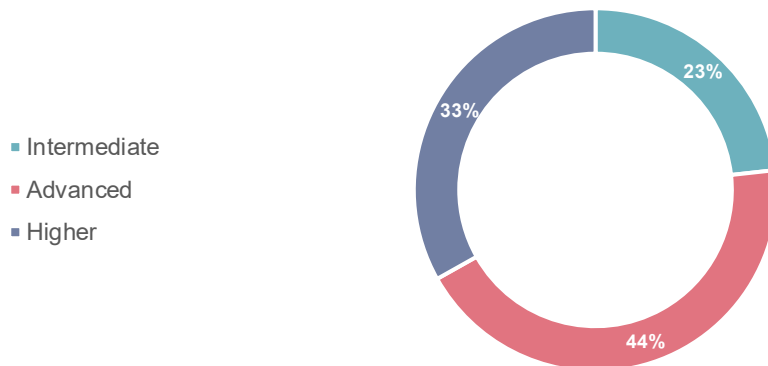
2.14 Apprenticeships in Breckland and King’s Lynn & West Norfolk are generally high-skilled, with 77% at an advanced or higher level, close to the regional (81%) and national (79%) averages. Breckland performs well on apprenticeship participation, with 479 starts and 221 completions per 1,000 residents, above the regional average (439 starts and 190 completions) and broadly in line with the national average (483 starts and 206 completions). In contrast, King’s Lynn & West Norfolk significantly underperforms, with 411 starts and 190 completions per 1,000 residents—both below regional and national averages.<sup>4,5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Department for Education, 2024. Apprenticeships: Geography Region and LAD - Starts, Achievements by Sex, Level, Ethnicity, SSA.

<sup>5</sup> ONS, 2024. Population estimates.

**Figure 2.3 A high proportion (77%) of apprenticeships in Breckland, and King’s Lynn & West Norfolk are in advanced or higher courses**

Apprenticeships by course level (2024)



Source: Department for Education, 2024. Apprenticeships: Geography Region and LAD - Starts, Achievements by Sex, Level, Ethnicity, SSA.

2.15

Given Breckland’s strong apprenticeship completion rate and the high proportion of advanced-level apprenticeships in Breckland and King’s Lynn & West Norfolk, it is vital that there continues to be sufficient capacity in apprenticeship infrastructure. Engagement with stakeholders also highlighted the need to expand this provision wherever feasible to meet local demand.

In addition, the Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan highlights the need to improve the accessibility and ease of accessing skills training, which remains a challenge across the region.<sup>6</sup> This was echoed during the employment and skills workshop, where it was noted that apprenticeship opportunities need to be better aligned with local supply chain needs. Greater employer engagement, alongside improved use of levy-sharing schemes and financial incentives, was identified as key to achieving this.

## Young residents face a number of barriers accessing economic opportunities



2.16

Educational attainment levels in Norfolk are below national and regional averages. At Key Stage 2 (KS2), 59% of non-disadvantaged students in Norfolk meet the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths, compared to 36% of disadvantaged students, a gap of 23 percentage points (p.p) (see **Figure 2.4**). Both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students in Norfolk underperform relative to national averages, with non-disadvantaged students eight p.p. below and disadvantaged students nine p.p. below.<sup>7</sup> This underperformance carries through to Key Stage 4 (KS4), where only 42.2% of Norfolk students achieve grade 5 or above in English and maths, below both the regional (45.6%) and national (45.5%) averages.<sup>8</sup>

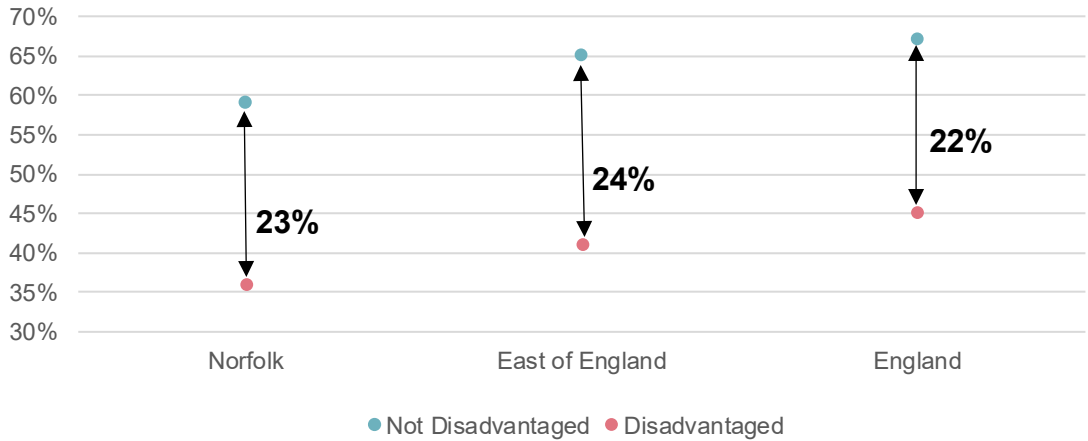
<sup>6</sup> Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, 2024. Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan

<sup>7</sup> Department for Education, 2024. Education and training statistics for the UK

<sup>8</sup> Department for Education, 2024. Education and training statistics for the UK

**Figure 2.4** There is a large differential between the educational attainment of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students

Proportion of students meeting the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths by geography and characteristic (2023)



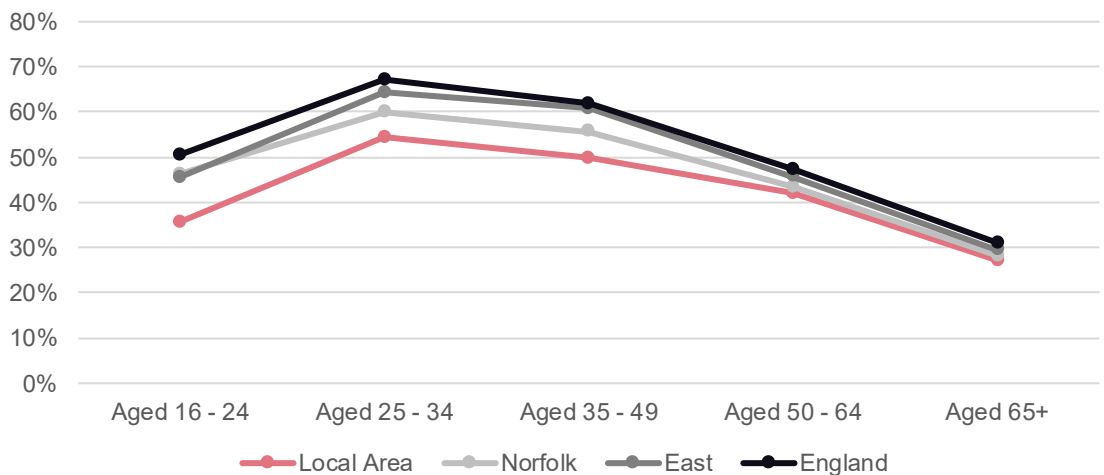
Source: Department for Education, 2024. Education and training statistics for the UK

2.17

**Figure 2.5** shows the proportion of residents with Level 3 qualifications or above is lower in both the Local Area and Norfolk compared to regional and national averages, with the gap most pronounced among residents aged 16–34. This underperformance highlights a structural skills gap that is likely to persist, particularly among younger residents, limiting their access to higher-value employment opportunities and constraining long-term business growth across key sectors.

**Figure 2.5** The proportion of residents with Level 3 qualifications or above is lower in both the Local Area and Norfolk compared to regional and national averages

Proportion of residents with Level 3 qualifications or higher (2021)



Source: ONS, 2024. Census 2021

2.18 This shortfall in qualification levels does not appear to be explained by young people leaving education early to enter employment. Instead, the evidence suggests that a large proportion of young people in the Local Area are disengaged from both education and the labour market. **Table 2.2** highlights that economic inactivity among 16–24 year olds is notably higher than in regional and national comparators. Norfolk also records a higher proportion of 16–17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), reinforcing concerns about youth disengagement.

**Table 2.2 The Local Area has a higher economic inactivity rate and proportion of 16-17 year olds who are NEET**

Economic inactivity rate and proportion NEET across study areas (2021)

| Geography  | Economic inactivity rate for 16 to 24 year olds (excluding full time students) | Proportion of 16-17 year olds who are NEET |
|------------|--|--|
| Local Area | 10.3%  | —  |
| Norfolk    | 8.2%   | 3.8%                                       |
| East       | 7.4%   | 3.1%                                       |
| England    | 7.5%   | 2.8%                                       |

Source: ONS, 2024. Census 2021. Department for education, 2024. Participation in education, training and NEET age 16 to 17 by local authority; ONS, 2024. Census 2021

2.19 Taken together, these indicators point to wider barriers faced by young residents in accessing and progressing through the education system and into work. The Breckland Skills Plan 2024 identifies the need to “improve the support for school leavers, who businesses report have a low level of employability skills, have a lack of awareness of their opportunities, and who have a low level of confidence regarding their prospects.”<sup>9</sup> This theme also emerged during the employment and skills workshop, where stakeholders emphasised the need for stronger career guidance and aspiration-building for those aged 16 to 30. Transport barriers, particularly in rural areas, were also highlighted as a major constraint on access to education and employment.

## A strong local skills base in technical and trade occupations

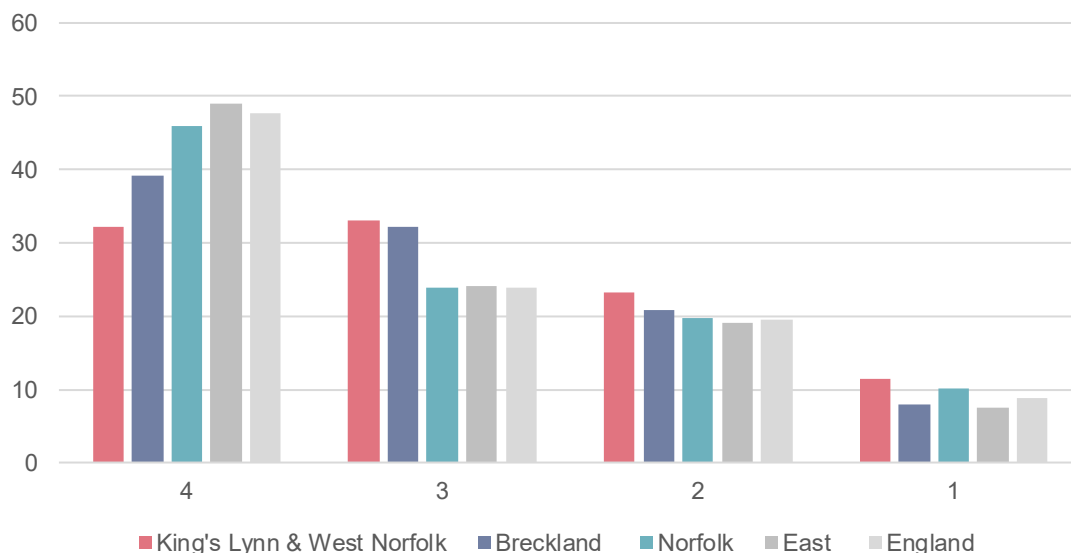


2.20 Breckland and King’s Lynn have a lower proportion of professional occupations but higher levels of employment in technical and trade roles. Over 30% of the workforce in these areas are employed in technical and trade occupations, which aligns well with the skills needed for construction-related jobs. This presents a key opportunity for the Scheme to support local employment by creating roles that match the existing skill base, particularly at Level 3 (technical and trades) and Level 2 (general education knowledge).

<sup>9</sup> Breckland Council, 2024. Breckland Skills Plan: 2024

**Figure 2.6 King’s Lynn has a lower proportion of residents in Level 4 skilled roles than all comparator geographies**

Skill breakdown by study area (2023)



Source: ONS, 2024. Annual Population Survey. Note: Level 4: Includes professional occupations and high-level managerial positions, requiring a degree or relevant work experience. Level 3: Involves technical and trades occupations, typically requiring post-compulsory education short of a degree. Level 2: Covers occupations requiring general education knowledge, such as machine operators, drivers, and carers. Level 1: Relates to roles requiring competence from compulsory education, like postal workers, cleaners, and catering assistants.

- 2.21 Professional and high-level managerial roles (Level 4) are underrepresented in Breckland and King’s Lynn & West Norfolk, compared to national averages, suggesting a gap in access to high-skilled employment. This points to the potential for targeted training and career progression initiatives to help local residents move into higher-skilled roles. The Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan also highlights a wider skills shortage across the region, with businesses in several sectors reporting difficulties with recruitment.<sup>10</sup>
- 2.22 Feedback from the employment and skills workshop reinforced the importance of improving collaboration between employers and education providers. Stronger partnerships with initiatives such as the Careers Hub, STEM Ambassadors, and local training providers could help raise awareness of career pathways and better align skills provision with industry needs. Stakeholders also highlighted existing programmes, such as the Boost Programme and the Breckland Skills Assembly, as valuable models that could be expanded to support long-term skills development and employment opportunities.

<sup>10</sup> Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, 2024. Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan

## 3. Opportunities created by the Scheme

- 3.1 This section identifies opportunities created by the Scheme, during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases. The estimates presented in this section should be considered preliminary and subject to refinement as the Scheme evolves.

### Construction and decommissioning phase

- 3.2 The Construction Phase is anticipated to take place over approximately 24 months. The final programme will depend on the detailed layout design and potential environmental constraints on the timing of construction activities. However, the Scheme is anticipated to energise in Q4 2033, and it is therefore anticipated that the earliest the Construction Phase would commence would be Q3 2031.
- 3.3 **Table 3.1** provides an estimated breakdown of construction jobs and skills developed by the Applicant and its advisory team. It is estimated that the two-year construction period would support a peak of approximately 740 construction jobs and, in total, would support approximately 1,245 construction job opportunities during this phase. There will be employment opportunities for local residents within the Labour Catchment Area (LCA) (see **Table 1.1**) during the Construction Phase. However, it is expected that a number of jobs will be taken by people living outside the LCA. For the purposes of the PEIR, a broad range is presented based on a conservative leakage of 50%-75% outside of the LCA. This is consistent with the approach undertaken in Chapter 14: Socio-economics and human health of the PEIR.
- 3.4 The decommissioning phase of the Scheme is anticipated to span 12-24 months at the end of the operational life of the Scheme. It is currently assumed that a workforce equivalent to the size of approximately 50%-80% of the construction workforce will be required for decommissioning.
- 3.5 It is important to note that this breakdown of the types of jobs and skills is an early and indicative estimate of the expected profile of the construction workforce. In particular, an EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction) contractor has not yet been brought on board to deliver the Scheme. The EPC that is appointed will have their own estimate of how they expect to deliver the Scheme, both in terms of skills required and the total workforce needed. The figure will be subject to change once the preferred EPC contractor is appointed and will likely be reviewed at the stage between the OESS being submitted and the detailed ESS being conditioned pre-commencement of construction.

### Local employment

- 3.6 It is expected that there will be opportunities for local employment of residents within the LCA during construction. The range of jobs required includes specialised solar PV professions, with some roles potentially facing scarce resources in terms of skills and labour availability locally. It is, therefore, inevitable that some roles will be filled by people living outside the LCA. Construction workforces for major development projects tend to be highly mobile, with workers moving to where the work is.<sup>11</sup>
- 3.7 Work is ongoing to understand the availability of skills locally, establish a reasonable local employment target for the construction of the Scheme, and identify measures to both upskill and attract a local workforce.

---

<sup>11</sup> Strauss, Delphine, Gross, Anna, 2024. Does the UK have enough workers to 'get Britain building'?

**Table 3.1** outlines the types of roles and skills likely to be supported during the construction phase of the Scheme, however, this is an indicative list with further detail to be provided in the OESS.

3.8 Feedback is sought from stakeholders on local skills and the types of roles that have the potential to be filled more locally within Breckland and King’s Lynn & West Norfolk. Feedback would also be sought on determining the extent of the local area for establishing local employment targets during construction to ensure the Scheme maximises benefits from employment and skills provision to the considered local community.

**Table 3.1 Types of roles and skills likely to be supported during the Construction Phase of the Scheme**

| Job Name                                       | Responsibilities  | Skills Required  |
|--|---|--|
| Site Manager                                   | Oversee the overall site operations, ensuring construction is completed on time and within budget. Manage subcontractors, safety, and quality.  | Degree in construction management or engineering. Experience in large-scale infrastructure projects. Strong leadership and communication skills. |
| Civil Workers                                  | Prepare the site, including removal and storage of topsoil, levelling the land, building access roads, digging trenches for cabling, and laying foundations for solar stations and substations. | Ability to operate construction equipment (e.g., excavators, trenchers). Experience in civil works, including concrete and structural work.      |
| Mechanical Workers                             | Install mounting structures, frames, and panels. Ensure mechanical systems are properly secured and aligned.  | Experience with solar installation techniques.   |
| Electrical Workers                             | Install and connect solar panels, inverters, and cabling. Test electrical systems and ensure compliance with technical and safety standards.  | NVQ Level 3 in electrical installation or equivalent.  |
| Commissioning Engineers                        | Test and verify the performance of the installed solar system. Identify and fix any technical issues before handover.   | Degree in electrical or mechanical engineering. Experience in commissioning large-scale infrastructure projects. Strong problem-solving skills.  |
| Landscaping and Site Restoration Workers       | Carry out landscaping and restoration of the site, including planting, erosion control, and access road repair.   | Experience in landscaping, site restoration, and environmental compliance. Proficiency in operating landscaping equipment.                       |
| Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) Officers | Ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. Conduct site inspections and provide training on safety protocols.  | Recognised HSE qualification. Experience in managing safety on large construction sites.   |
| Logistics and Procurement Manager              | Manage the supply chain, including sourcing and delivering materials and equipment.   | Experience in procurement and logistics. Recognised procurement qualification. Strong organisational skills.                                     |

| Job Name           | Responsibilities   | Skills Required   |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Security Personnel | Monitor and protect the site during construction. Manage access control and respond to security incidents.           | Experience in security operations. Knowledge of security protocols and emergency response.                        |
| General Labourers  | Provide support across various site activities, including material handling, assisting trades, and site maintenance. | Experience in construction labouring. CSCS card or equivalent. Ability to follow instructions and work in a team. |

## Supply chain and procurement opportunities

- 3.9 The Scheme will support a range of supply chain opportunities to local businesses. It is expected that the Scheme will use the local supply chain to source some materials and components, create partnerships between suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors, and as such will stimulate economic activity within the LCA.
- 3.10 The procurement of all key equipment, whether by the Applicant or its contractors, will follow standard competitive bidding practices, with final award decisions based on technical compliance, price, and other key onboarding criteria. For the purposes of the PESS, it is not yet known which materials could be sourced locally; however, this will be further explored for the ES through engagement with Breckland Council and other stakeholders. A separate Supply Chain Strategy will be delivered as part of the full DCO Application.

## Opportunities during operation

- 3.11 The Scheme will generate a limited number of permanent operational employment opportunities. However, due to the design life of certain infrastructure components, parts of the Scheme will require replacement during the Operational Phase. This will result in ad hoc employment opportunities related to ongoing maintenance. Given the nature of the Scheme, operational employment will primarily involve operation and maintenance crews, including technical professionals such as electrical engineers and performance managers, as well as landscaping teams and occasional repair crews. The types of skills required to be supported by these are outlined in **Table 3.2**
- 3.12 As in the construction phase, the jobs supported would also support long-term skills development for local residents. Many of the skills that will be developed among local residents will support career opportunities across the sector in the future.

**Table 3.2 Types of jobs supported during the operational phase**

| Job name             | Responsibilities  | Skills   |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Electrical Engineers | The electrical engineer would advise on the mechanical systems and would help to reinstall broken panels and maintain electrical systems required for the Scheme. | Degree in engineering or related field with an understanding of engineering principles.<br>Understanding of mechanical and electrical engineering principles, ability to use CAD software and familiarity with industry standards. |

| Job name                          | Responsibilities   | Skills   |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Performance Managers              | Performance managers will monitor, maintain, and look to optimise the solar power performance. These managers will be responsible for collecting data on various factor to see where improvements can be made, for example factors would include the system, voltage, and temperature. | Degree in engineering or related field with an understanding of engineering principles.<br>Understanding of mechanical and electrical engineering principles, ability to use CAD software and familiarity with industry standards. |
| Landscape Monitoring and Managers | Responsible for monitoring and maintaining the Site. This role involves ensuring the landscape remains in optimal condition and oversees plant health.   | Ability and proficiency in operating various equipment and performing basic labouring tasks to maintain the landscape  |
| CCTV and security                 | Responsible for protecting the site during the operational phase of the Scheme. They monitor surveillance systems and control access to site security.   | Basic understanding of security practices  |

## 4. Emerging employment and skills initiatives

4.1 The Applicant intends to make a strong commitment to implementing employment and skills initiatives as part of the Scheme. **Table 4.1** sets out a longlist of potential initiatives that are currently being explored, drawing on precedent from similar schemes. This list provides an early indication of the Applicant's ambition and areas of focus. As the Scheme evolves, and in response to ongoing consultation, the initiatives will be refined and developed further, with consideration given to which are the most achievable and the mechanisms for securing their delivery. The outline Employment and Skills Strategy (OESS), to be submitted with the DCO Application, will set out a more refined list of commitments with further detail, along with the steps required to ensure they are effectively secured and implemented.

**Table 4.1 Emerging employment and skills initiatives**

| Theme                         | Emerging initiative  | Next Steps  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Collaboration and partnership | Collaborate with council initiatives such as the Boost Programme, Careers Hub, and the Breckland Skills Assembly | Engage with the Councils and programme leads to understand how the Scheme can support and enhance these initiatives.      |
|                               | Collaborate with other projects to coordinate on skills and employment commitments                               | Engage with other developers in the area to align on employment and skills initiatives and ensure benefits are maximised. |
|                               | Partner with local education institutions  | Engage with local schools, colleges, and universities to identify partnership opportunities.                              |
|                               | Graduate trainee programmes  | Explore interest and potential structure for a graduate trainee programme with local universities and colleges.           |
|                               | Work with Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) organisations  | Engage with STEM organisations to understand how the Scheme can support outreach and education efforts.                   |
| Training and education        | Delivery of construction and operational apprenticeships   | Engage with local training providers to understand how apprenticeships could be delivered.                                |
|                               | Green energy construction courses  | Discuss with local education providers the potential for introducing green energy construction courses.                   |
|                               | Educational outreach on solar energy   | Explore opportunities for school and college outreach on solar energy and renewable technology.                           |
|                               | Offer site tours during the operational phase for schools and colleges   | Understand the level of interest and potential logistics for site tours.  |

| Theme            | Emerging initiative  | Next Steps  |
|------------------|--|---|
|                  | Summer internship and research programmes                                    | Engage with universities to understand interest in internship and research opportunities.   |
|                  | Sponsoring secondary or college students                                     | Explore potential sponsorship models with local education institutions.   |
| Local employment | Source main construction services from local contractors and sub-contractors | Engage with local suppliers and contractors to understand capacity and interest.  |
|                  | Advertising jobs on local job boards   | Engage with local job centres and boards to understand how best to advertise opportunities related to the Scheme.   |
|                  | Provide local jobs   | Discuss with local stakeholders how to maximise local hiring opportunities.   |
| Other            | Green energy awareness campaigns   | Collaborate with local partners to identify opportunities for delivering workshops on the benefits of green energy, sustainability, and environmental responsibility. |
|                  | Skills workshops for local residents   | Engage with local partners to understand the demand and structure for skills workshops.   |

## 5. Next steps

5.1 The Applicant is actively considering the emerging initiatives outlined above, with feedback sought from key stakeholders and the local community as part of the statutory consultation for the Scheme.

5.2 The next steps, to develop the OESS and then the final ESS, include:

- **Stakeholder engagement:** The Applicant will continue engaging with key stakeholders to gather inputs and refine the initiatives based on local needs and considerations of deliverability. This will involve meetings, workshops, and feedback sessions.
- **Detailed planning:** The Applicant will work on developing detailed plans for each initiative, including timelines, resources required, and key milestones.
- **Risk assessment:** The Applicant will conduct a risk assessment for each initiative to identify potential challenges and develop mitigation strategies. This will help ensure that the initiatives are robust and can be delivered.

# Contact Us

---

[volterra.co.uk](http://volterra.co.uk)

[info@volterra.co.uk](mailto:info@volterra.co.uk)

020 4529 1736

Chester House  
1-3 Brixton Road  
London  
SW9 6DE

## Disclaimer

**COPYRIGHT:** The concepts and information contained in this document are the property of Volterra Partners LLP. Use or copying of this document in whole or in part without the written permission of Volterra Partners LLP constitutes an infringement of copyright.

This work contains statistical data from ONS which is Crown Copyright. The use of the ONS statistical data in this work does not imply the endorsement of the ONS in relation to the interpretation or analysis of the statistical data. This work uses research datasets which may not exactly reproduce National Statistics aggregates.

**LIMITATION:** This report has been prepared on behalf of and for the exclusive use of Volterra Partners LLP's Client, and is subject to and issued in connection with the provisions of the agreement between Volterra Partners LLP and its Client.

Volterra Partners LLP accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for or in respect of any use of or reliance upon this report by any third party.