



Candwr Solar Farm

Pre Application Consultation

Economic Benefits Statement

2 July 2026





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Executive Summary

Background

This report outlines the economic benefits that will be created by Candwr Solar Farm (up to 46MW) on Land at Court Farm, Ponthir, Monmouthshire. It has been produced on behalf of Candwr Solar Farm Ltd (the “Applicant”) and the main quantifiable benefits for the construction and operational phases are:

- i. **Construction phase employment:** The Proposed Development could support up to 350 temporary jobs, both direct jobs on-site and in the wider supply chain, during the construction period of up to 18-months.
- ii. **Spend in the local area by construction employees:** The construction employees from outside the local area could spend around £2.3million in local businesses. This will help support the 2,300 accommodation & food and retail businesses that operate within the Combined Area¹.
- iii. **Contribution of construction phase to economic output:** The gross value added (GVA – a proxy for economic output) generated by jobs supported during the construction phase could be up to £36.6million.
- iv. **Permanent employment:** It is estimated that the Proposed Development will support up to 18 full-time equivalent jobs (FTE) in the Combined Area and the wider economy once it is operational.
- v. **Contribution to economic output associated with the permanent employment:** The GVA associated with the 18 FTEs is estimated to be £1.2million per annum.
- vi. **Business rates revenue:** Business rates generated by the solar project could be in the region of £1.1million (present value²) over the Proposed Development’s 40-year operational lifespan.
- vii. **Homes powered:** The Proposed Development is estimated to power 17,265 homes per annum³.
- viii. **Community benefit fund:** An annual community fund payment in the region of £46,000⁴ will be made, amounting to £1.8million over the 40-year lifespan of the scheme (current prices).

It should be noted that many of the benefits outlined above will be generated again during the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development, especially those relating to the construction phase.

¹ The Combined Area is made up of Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen local planning authorities.

² Where future benefits are calculated over a 10-year timeframe, they have been discounted to produce a present value. This is the discounted value of a stream of either future costs or benefits. A standard discount rate is used to convert all costs and benefits to present values. Using the Treasury’s Green Book, the recommended discount rate is 3.5%.

³ Information provided by the Applicant.

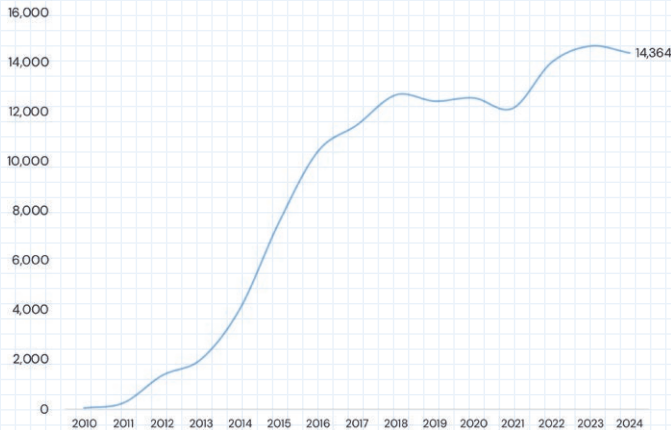
⁴ Figure is indicative.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

46MW SOLAR SYSTEM CANDWR SOLAR FARM, PONTNIR, MONMOUTHSHIRE

SUPPORTING A GROWING SECTOR

Power generated from solar PV (GWh) in the UK¹



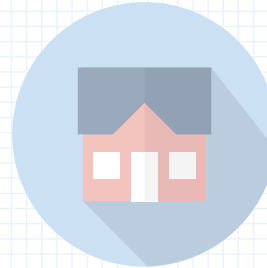
30GW by 2030

The government anticipate that at least 30GW of low carbon flexible assets, which includes electricity storage, may be needed by 2030 to maintain energy security. This rises to 60GW by 2050.

54%

Of electricity generation in Wales in 2024 was from renewable sources.⁵

BENEFITS



Generating electricity equivalent to the demand of **17,265** Typical homes each year.²

Supporting up to **350**

Temporary jobs, both on-site and in the wider supply chain during the 18-month construction phase, with a similar number supported during the decommissioning phase.

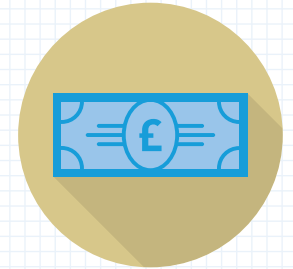


Supporting **18**

Permanent direct and indirect jobs once the proposed development is built and operational.

£46,000

Annual community benefit fund.⁶



Up to **£36.6million**

In gross value added to the economy over the 18-month construction phase, with a similar contribution expected from the decommissioning phase.



Up to **£27.5million**

In gross value added³ to the economy over the 40-years.⁴

£1.1million

Estimated business rates generated over the operational lifespan of the scheme (present value).

1. Based on data in the 2025 Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (DUKES), published by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

2. Information provided by the Applicant.

3. GVA, or gross value added, is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, sector or industry.

4. Where future benefits are calculated over a longer timeframe, they have been discounted to produce a present value.

5. Energy Generation & Use in Wales, First Combined Edition. Welsh Government, February 2026.

6. Figure is indicative.

1. Introduction

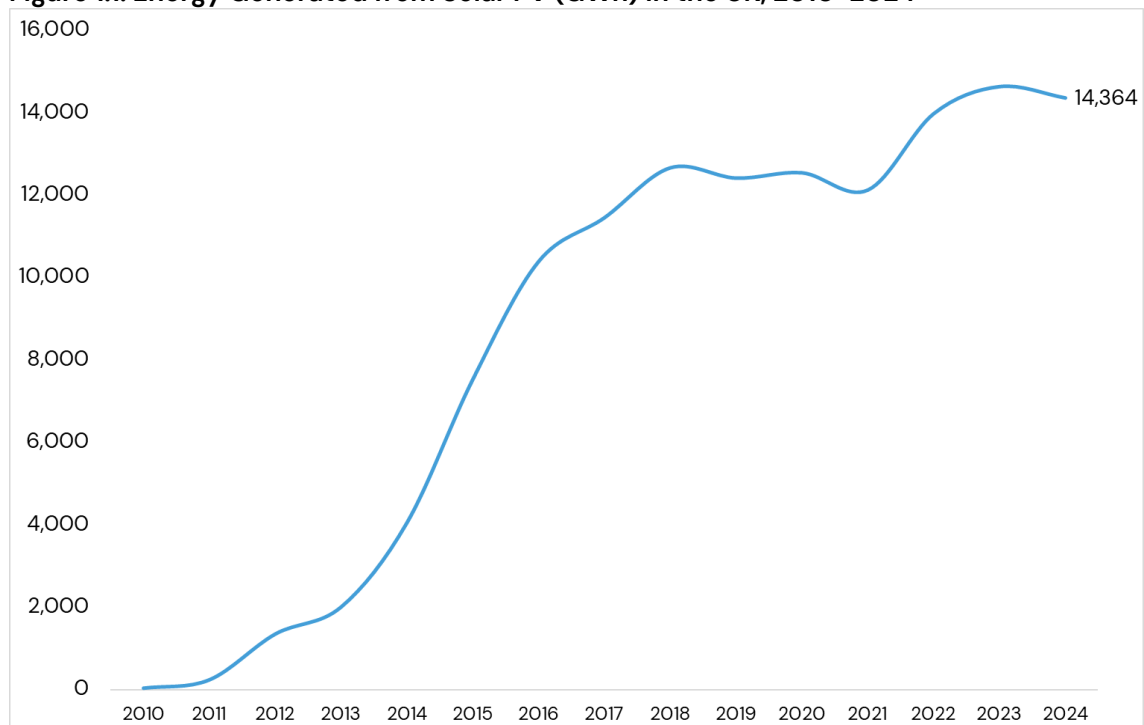
Scope and Purpose

- 1.1. This report outlines the economic benefits that will be generated by the proposed ground mounted solar farm (up to 46MW) on Land at Court Farm, Ponthir, Monmouthshire. It has been produced on behalf of Candwr Solar Farm Ltd (the "Applicant") and quantifies the main economic benefits from the construction and operational phases of the development.
- 1.2. The analysis draws on experience from comparable schemes delivered elsewhere in Wales and also public research on the development of renewable energy projects.

Supporting a Growing Sector

- 1.3. Data from the Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (DUKES) show that in the UK over the past 14 years, the amount of energy generated by solar PV has increased significantly. In 2010, only 40 GWh of solar PV energy was generated, but by 2024 the figure had reached 14,364 GWh. However, recent data indicates a noticeable slowdown in growth and even a decline between 2023 and 2024, which is concerning in light of the targets outlined in the Clean Power 2030 (CP2030) Action Plan⁵. This highlights the need for increased efforts to permit and develop more renewable energy sources to meet these targets. Figure 1.1 shows this increase in more detail for the UK as a whole.

Figure 1.1: Energy Generated from Solar PV (GWh) in the UK, 2010–2024

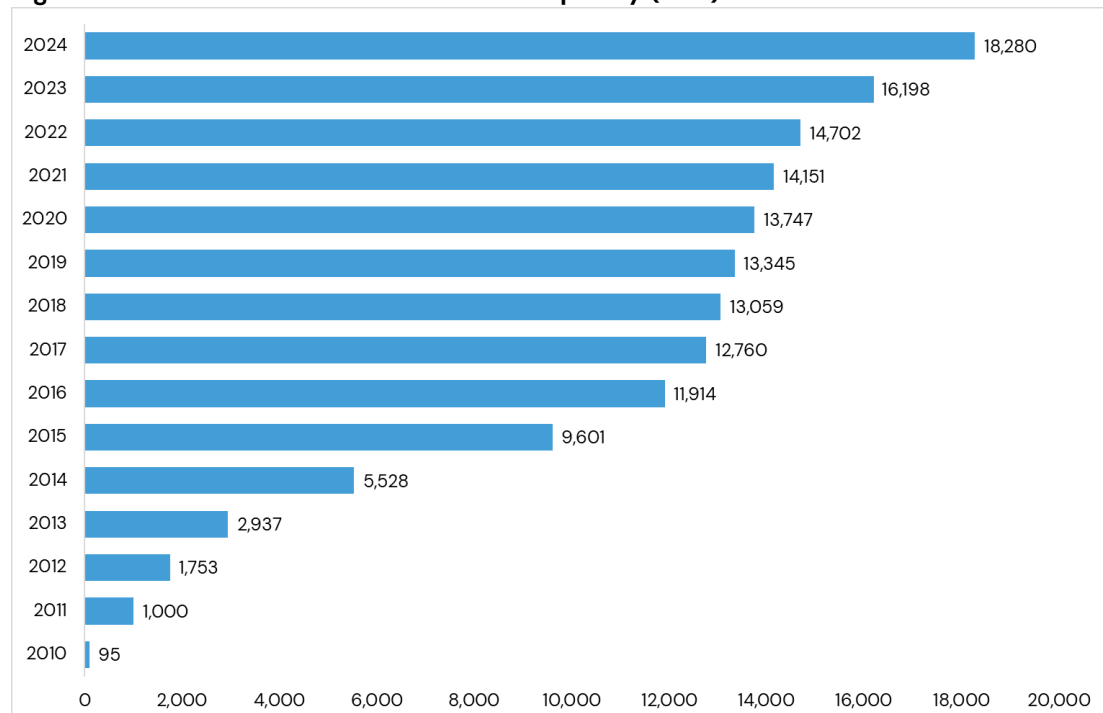


Source: Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (DUKES)

⁵ Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, December 2024. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/677bc80399c93b7286a396d6/clean-power-2030-action-plan-main-report.pdf>

- 1.4. The cumulative installed capacity of solar PV has increased rapidly over the past 14 years. In 2010 the installed capacity was 95 MW. This increased to 1,000 MW by 2011 and the most recent data for 2024 show the cumulative installed capacity of solar PV in the UK is 18,280 MW (see Figure 1.2). Schemes such as the Proposed Development will be critical if the installed capacity of solar PV is to continue increasing to help support the climate change agenda.

Figure 1.2: Cumulative Installed Solar PV Capacity (MW) in the UK 2024



Source: Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (DUKES)

Report Structure

- 1.5. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** describes the character of the Combined Area of Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen, in comparison to the local authorities in isolation and Wales. It presents information on employment trends, business numbers, unemployment and the claimant count.
 - **Section 3** sets out the construction phase benefits of the Proposed Development, outlining its contribution to employment, economic output and potential spend associated with people working on-site during the build phase.
 - **Section 4** sets out the number of jobs that the Proposed Development will create once fully developed and presents the assessment of the contribution of the Proposed Development to economic output and business rates. It also looks at how it will contribute to economic development objectives.
 - **Section 5** presents a summary of the overall findings.

2. Socio-Economic Baseline

Introduction

- 2.1. This section presents a profile of Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen, as well as these three areas combined (hereafter referred to as the 'Combined Area' area), alongside Wales for comparison purposes. The site location and Combined Area is shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Map of the Site Location and Combined Area



- 2.2. The following topics are examined:
- Employment – change over time and key sectors.
 - Business numbers including change over time.
 - The claimant count- a proxy for unemployment.
 - Household numbers.
 - Fuel poverty.

Employment

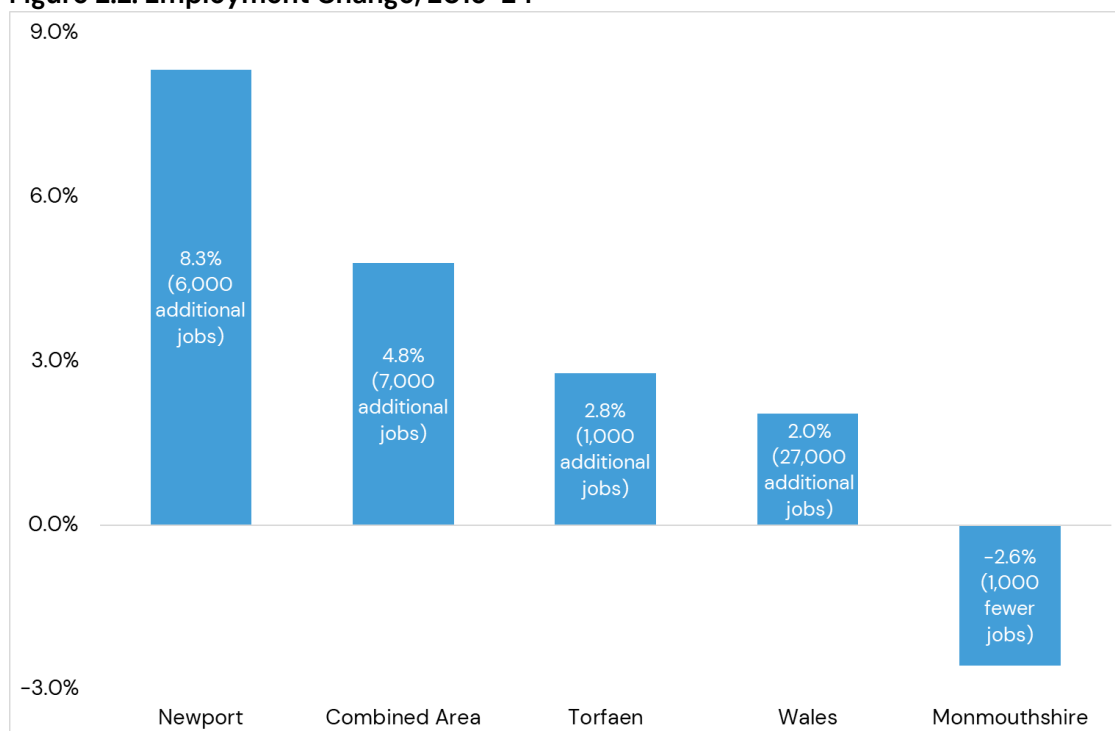
Employment Change, 2015–24

- 2.3. Based on the most recent data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) from the Business Register & Employment Survey (BRES), in 2024 there were around 153,000

jobs – including self-employment – in the Combined Area of Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.

- 2.4. Between 2015 and 2024, there was employment growth of 4.8% in the Combined Area, equating to 7,000⁶ additional jobs. This was mainly driven by the growth in Newport which saw employment numbers increase from 72,000 to 78,000, equating to 6,000 additional jobs. Torfaen saw an increase of 1,000 from 36,000 to 37,000 whilst Monmouthshire saw employment decrease by 2.6% from 39,000 to 38,000, representing 1,000 fewer jobs.
- 2.5. The employment change in the Combined Area was higher than Wales as a whole, which saw growth of 2.0%, a 27,000 increase from a little over 1.32 million to around 1.35 million jobs between 2015 and 2024..
- 2.6. The Proposed Development will create jobs in the Combined Area and support the area's growth by providing new labour market opportunities.

Figure 2.2: Employment Change, 2015–24



Source: ONS, Business Register & Employment Survey

- 2.7. Public administration, education and health is the largest sector in the Combined Area, accounting for around 51,000 jobs and representing 33.2% of all jobs as of 2024. There is a similar trend across all areas with the public administration, education, and health sector accounting for the highest proportion of jobs. The highest proportion can be seen in Torfaen (40.1%, 15,000 jobs) followed by Wales (34.2%, 461,000 jobs), Monmouthshire (30.4%, 11,500 jobs) and Newport (30.2%, 23,500 jobs).

⁶ Figures may not sum due to rounding.

- 2.8. The second largest sector in the Combined Area is business, financial and professional services, which accounted for 16.9% (26,000) of jobs in 2024, followed by wholesale and retail which accounted for 13.7% (21,000) of all jobs. The construction sector, which will see job opportunities created during the build phase, accounts for 4.6% (7,000 jobs) of employment in the Combined Area, which is similar to the rate in Wales at 5.0% (67,000). Table 2.1 breaks down employment by sector in more detail.

Table 2.1: Employment by Sector, 2024

	Combined Area	Monmouthshire	Newport	Torfaen	Wales
Agriculture, mining, utilities etc.	3.1%	5.6%	2.5%	1.5%	4.7%
Manufacturing	11.1%	7.9%	10.3%	16.1%	9.9%
Construction	4.6%	6.6%	3.9%	5.4%	5.0%
Wholesale & retail	13.7%	17.2%	12.2%	13.1%	13.3%
Transport & storage	4.6%	3.3%	5.8%	2.7%	3.2%
Accommodation & food services	7.2%	9.3%	6.4%	5.4%	8.3%
Information & communication	2.6%	2.4%	3.2%	1.6%	2.0%
Business, financial & professional services	16.9%	13.4%	22.2%	10.8%	15.3%
Public admin, education & health	33.2%	30.4%	30.2%	40.1%	34.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	3.3%	4.0%	3.2%	3.3%	4.2%

Source: ONS, Business Register & Employment Survey

Business Numbers

- 2.9. Between 2015 and 2025, the number of businesses in the Combined Area grew by 9.2% (1,115 additional businesses) from 12,175 to 13,290. This represented a higher growth when compared with the increase seen in Wales of 5.0% (6,095 additional businesses) from 120,825 to 126,920.
- 2.10. Table 2.2 presents the business data in more detail. Existing businesses in the Combined Area will benefit from the Proposed Development, especially during the build phase when construction workers will be spending money in the local economy on accommodation and items such as food and drink.

Table 2.2: Change in Business Numbers, 2015–2025

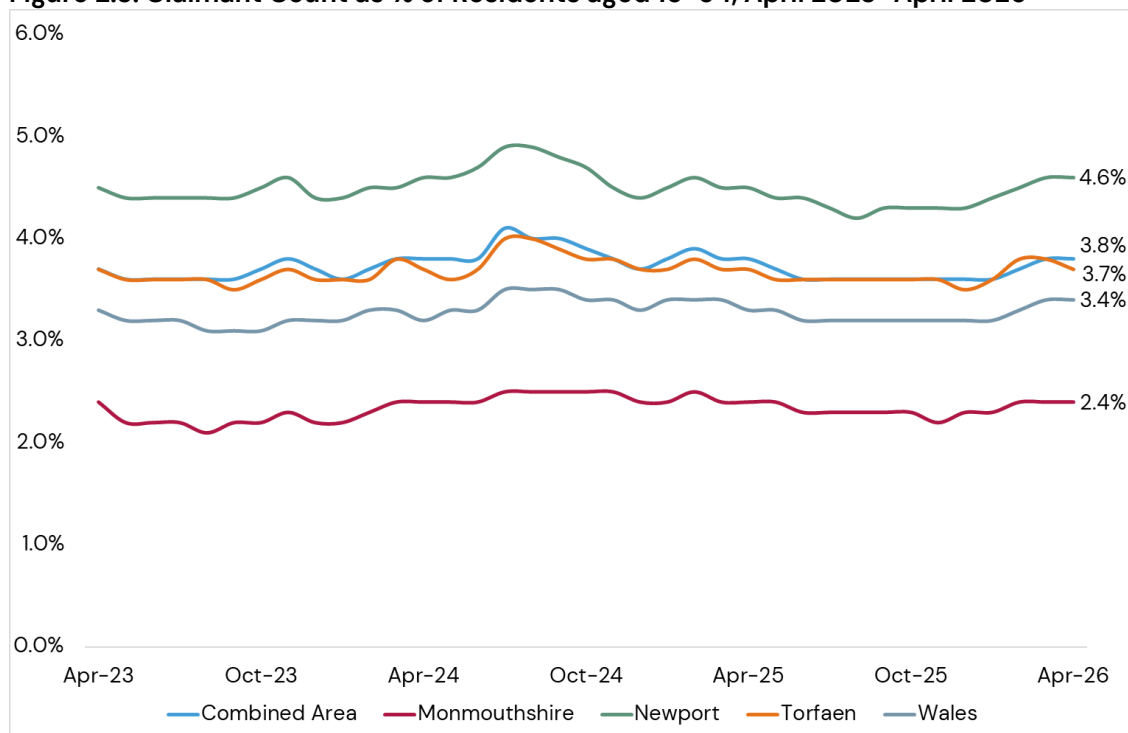
	2015	2025	Absolute Change	% Change
Combined Area	12,175	13,290	1,115	9.2%
Monmouthshire	4,900	5,055	155	3.2%
Newport	4,695	5,290	595	12.7%
Torfaen	2,580	2,945	365	14.1%
Wales	120,825	126,920	6,095	5.0%

Source: ONS, UK Business Count

Claimant Count

- 2.11. Another way of analysing unemployment is to look at the claimant count, which records the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work.
- 2.12. Figure 2.3 shows the claimant count in the Combined Area, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Wales for every month from April 2023 to April 2026, expressed as a proportion of residents aged 16–64. In April 2023, the claimant count in the Combined Area was 3.7% and by April 2026 it had risen slightly to 3.8%. This equates to around 210 additional people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit who are required to seek work and be available for work. As of April 2026, the claimant count in the Combined Area is above the rate in Wales (3.4%).
- 2.13. As the claimant count is slightly higher in the Combined Area compared to Wales it remains imperative that new job opportunities are created in all parts of the country over the next few years and the Proposed Development will do this in the Combined Area.

Figure 2.3: Claimant Count as % of Residents aged 16–64, April 2023–April 2026



Source: ONS, Claimant Count

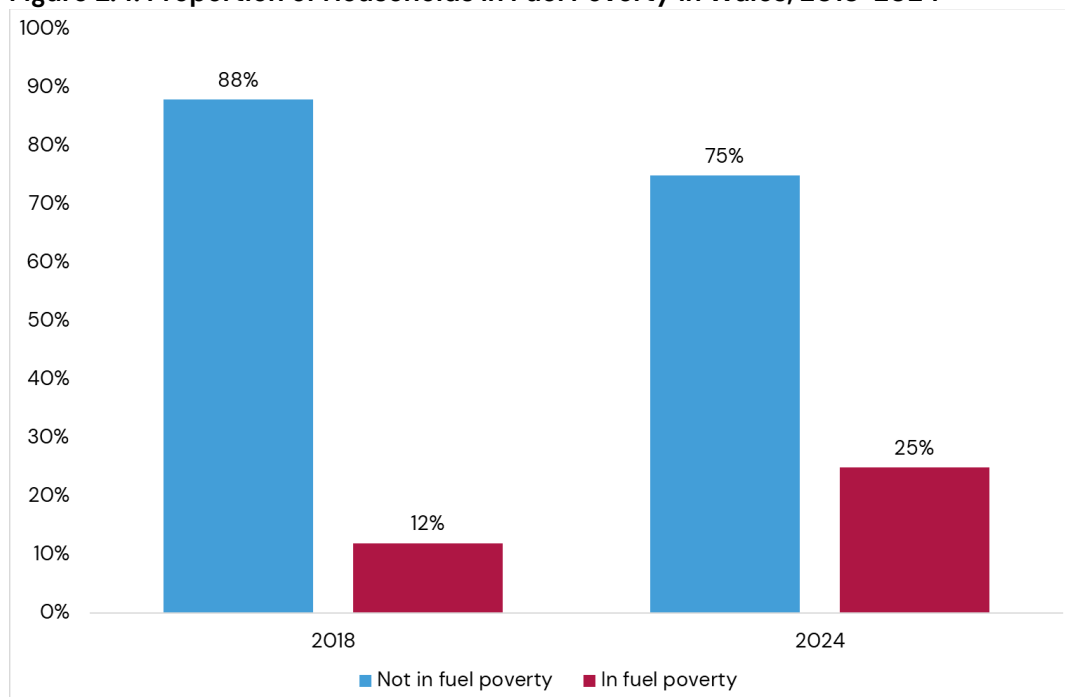
Fuel Poverty

- 2.14. A household is considered to be fuel poor if, when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line. Data from the

Welsh Government show the proportion of households considered to be experiencing fuel poverty⁷.

- 2.15. Looking at figures for Wales, it can be seen that fuel poverty has increased between 2018 and 2024. As of 2018 there were 155,000 households living in fuel poverty, equating to 12% of total households. This then increased by more than double to 340,000 households in fuel poverty in 2024, equating to 25% of all homes.

Figure 2.4: Proportion of Households in Fuel Poverty in Wales, 2018–2024



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

Household Numbers

- 2.16. The Proposed Development can help in supporting the fuel security of households in Monmouthshire and the wider area. Based on data from the 2021 Census, Monmouthshire is home to just under 95,000 people in 40,923 households. This is fewer households compared to Newport (66,054 households) but a higher number compared to Torfaen (40,241 households).

⁷ Data are not available at a local authority level therefore only the data for Wales is presented.

Table 2.3: Number of households, 2021

	Households
Combined Area	147,218
Monmouthshire	40,923
Newport	66,054
Torfaen	40,241
Wales	1,347,114

Source: 2021 Census, ONS

Summary

- **Employment:** The Combined Area saw jobs increase by 4.8% between 2015 and 2024 which was a higher increase than the jobs growth seen across Wales (2.0%). The construction sector, which will see job opportunities created during the build phase, accounts for 4.6% (7,000 jobs) of employment in the Combined Area.
- **Business Numbers:** Between 2015 and 2025, the number of businesses in the Combined Area grew by 9.2% (1,115 additional businesses). This growth was higher than the figure for Wales (5.0%).
- **Unemployment:** The claimant count as of April 2026 is 3.8% in the Combined Area, which is slightly higher than the figure for Wales of 3.4%.
- **Fuel Poverty:** The number of households in fuel poverty increased in Wales between 2018 to 2024 from 12% to 25%. The cost of energy is a significant issue for households, which serves to highlight the importance of having a sustainable long-term supply of energy.

3. Construction Phase Benefits

Supporting Construction Employment

- 3.1. Solar projects create opportunities for local businesses through the supply chain, including aggregates suppliers, security and monitoring during operation, farming and landscaping contractors and other aspects of the construction process, such as fencing. Construction workers may also use local services, which can bring further benefits to an area.
- 3.2. Based on information provided by the Applicant, there are expected to be up to 150 on-site jobs supported during the peak build phase. The construction period is anticipated to be up to 18-months.
- 3.3. The direct jobs on-site will support further employment via the “multiplier effect”, which measures further economic activity (jobs, expenditure or income) associated with additional local income and local supplier purchases. Research published in 2014 by the Centre for Economic & Business Research (CEBR) on solar powered growth in the UK⁸ gives an employment multiplier for large-scale solar PV investments of 2.33 – i.e. for every single job supported on-site, 1.33 indirect/induced jobs are supported in the wider economy. Applying this multiplier to the peak of 150 on-site jobs, the Proposed Development could support up to 200 additional temporary jobs in the wider economy during the 18-month build phase.
- 3.4. In total, the Proposed Development could support up to 350 temporary jobs, both direct jobs on-site and indirect/induced roles in the wider economy, during peak times of the 18-month construction period. A similar number of jobs are expected to be supported as part of the decommissioning process after 40 years when the solar project comes to the end of its lifespan.

Gross value added

- 3.5. The contribution of the site to economic output has been calculated by taking the peak 150 on-site jobs associated with the Proposed Development and multiplying this by an estimate of average levels of gross value added (GVA) per construction employee in Wales. Based on data sourced from ONS for 2023, GVA per construction employee in Wales is around £72,958 per annum.
- 3.6. The 86 indirect/induced jobs have been multiplied by the average GVA per job for all sectors in England & Wales (reflecting the fact that not all indirect/induced jobs will be in Wales). Based on 2023 ONS data, annual GVA per job is approximately £67,473.
- 3.7. Based on the figures above, it is estimated that during the 18-month construction of the Proposed Development, the GVA associated with the temporary jobs supported on-site and in the wider economy could be up to £36.6million.

⁸ *Solar powered growth in the UK – the macroeconomic benefits for the UK of investment in solar PV*: CEBR (report for the Solar Trade Association), September 2014.

Construction Spend in the Local Area

- 3.8. Research published by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) in May 2023⁹ shows that nearly all construction workers in Wales live in Wales (93%). Due to the specialist nature of some parts of the Proposed Development, it is unlikely that a similar proportion of on-site workers will be living in Wales. The same CITB research also indicates that around 27% of a construction worker's career is mostly spent in Wales. Taking into account the specialist nature of some parts of the Proposed Development, it is felt that a figure of 27% of jobs is more realistic when considering the proportion of on-site build phase jobs that could be taken by local people or those living in the wider area.
- 3.9. Assuming therefore that at least 27% of the jobs are taken by local people during the build phase, the remaining 73% will be taken by people outside of the local area. These workers are likely to stay in the local area during construction and will spend money on accommodation and food and drink. It is therefore possible to estimate how much the construction workers could spend in the local area, thus supporting local businesses.
- 3.10. The build phase is expected to last 18 months and 110 jobs supported on-site could be taken by workers from outside of the Combined Area (73% of the overall of 150 on-site jobs). Workers from outside the area will be staying in hotels, B&B's etc. during the build phase. They will also be spending money in shops, other amenities, etc. Taking into account the fact that a number of these workers will share accommodation to reduce costs, it is assumed that half the 110 jobs (55) are taken by people who stay in accommodation by themselves and the other half share accommodation. For the 55 people sharing accommodation, the spend figure outlined below in paragraph 3.11 has been halved to reflect the cost saving. The analysis below gives a high-level estimate of what this level of spend could equate to. The estimated number of workers for each of the 18 months during the construction phase is outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Number of Construction Workers on-site from outside Combined Area

	Jobs on-site
Month 1	25
Month 2	30
Month 3	33
Month 4	37
Month 5	40
Month 6	43
Month 7	47
Month 8	50
Month 9	55
Month 10	55
Month 11	50
Month 12	47
Month 13	43
Month 14	40
Month 15	37
Month 16	33
Month 17	30
Month 18	25

⁹ Workforce Mobility and Skills in the UK Construction Sector 2022. – Wales Report. CITB, May 2023.

- 3.11. Assuming each worker staying in accommodation by themselves spends around £100 per day on accommodation¹⁰, food and drink etc. and those sharing accommodation spend around £50 per day¹¹, there are 21.75 working days in a month and it is estimated that during the 18-month construction phase, the construction employees from outside the local area could spend around £2.3million in local businesses. This will help support the 2,300 accommodation & food and retail businesses¹² that operate within the Combined Area.

¹⁰ Assumes up to £70 per day on accommodation and up to £30 per day on food & drink, other items etc.

¹¹ Assumes up to £35 per day on accommodation and up to £15 per day on food & drink, other items etc.

¹² Based on data for 2025 from the UK Business Count, published by ONS.

4. Operational Phase Benefits

Introduction

- 4.1. This section outlines the impact of the Proposed Development once operational, in terms of supporting permanent employment and economic output in the Combined Area and the wider region. It also provides estimates on the business rates generated by the Proposed Development on an annual basis. In addition, a summary of how it will support economic development objectives is provided. Reference is also made to the Welsh Government's objectives on the wider climate change agenda.

Employment

Research published by Cardiff University¹³ suggests that 0.4 FTE jobs will be produced per MW installed for solar/Photovoltaic (PV) schemes during the operational phase. The research looks at a variety of energy generation technologies and the number of jobs supported per MW of installed capacity for each. The findings are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Jobs Supported per MW of Installed Capacity

	Coal	Gas	Nuclear	Onshore wind	Offshore wind	Solar/PV	Tidal stream	Wave
FTE jobs per MW installed	1.4	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.8

Source: Cardiff University

- 4.2. Applying this to the Proposed Development (46 MW) once operational, up to 18 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs on-site and in the wider economy. This is likely to include roles in civil engineering, land management, operations and maintenance.

Gross Value Added

- 4.3. The contribution of the Proposed Development to economic output has been calculated by taking the job creation associated with the Proposed Development and multiplying this by an estimate of average levels of GVA per employee in England and Wales (around £67,473 in 2023, based on ONS data). It is estimated that once operational and fully occupied, GVA associated with the 18 FTE jobs will be around £1.2million per annum.
- 4.4. Looking at the economic output contribution over the 40-year operational lifespan of the project, the GVA associated with the 18 FTE jobs is estimated to be £27.5million (present value)¹⁴.

¹³ *Regional electricity generation and employment in UK regions*, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, 2015. Available at: <https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/77013/3/Energy%20Paper%20Sept%2023rd%20%202015%20Main%20Orca.pdf>.

¹⁴ Where future benefits are calculated over a timeframe of ten or more years, they have been discounted to produce a present value. This is the discounted value of a stream of either future costs or benefits. A standard discount rate is used to convert all costs and benefits to present values. Using the Treasury's Green Book, the recommended discount rate is 3.5% up to year 30 and then 3% thereafter.

Business Rates

- 4.5. Based on data from the Photovoltaic Memorandum of Agreement published in February 2023, solar farms greater than 10MW are charged a rate of £2,040 per MW. Applying a multiplier of 0.515¹⁵, this gives a ratable value per MW of £1,050.82.
- 4.6. Based on the above, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate around £48,328 per annum in business rates. Over the intended 40-year lifespan of the scheme, business rates generated could total around £1.1million (present value).
- 4.7. Business rates are collated into a central government pot and shared out, as such, it is not possible to ascertain the exact split between local authorities and therefore the amount of business rates generated is considered as a single amount in this report.

Powering Homes

- 4.8. Information provided by the Applicant suggests that the Proposed Development will support 17,265 homes a year, based on each home consuming 3,500kWh/year of energy¹⁶.

Community Benefits

- 4.9. As part of the legacy community benefits associated with the application, the Applicant has committed to a community benefit fund, that would be paid annually for the lifetime of the development. Depending on the structure of the fund, the annual payment based on the candidate layout would be approximately £46,000 per annum. This equates to approximately £1.8million over the lifetime of the project in current prices. This is currently an indicative estimate and has not been formally agreed or secured.

Supporting Economic Development Objectives

All Wales Plan 2021–25, Working Together to Reach Net Zero

- 4.10. The All Wales Plan for 2021–2025¹⁷ was the Welsh governments strategic climate action framework. The Plan sets out pledges to target seven areas and while it is now slightly dated, the seven areas are still relevant in 2026.
 1. Commitment to net zero or action on climate emergency.
 2. Understanding and reducing carbon footprint.
 3. Education, engagement and capacity building.
 4. Energy and reducing energy demand.
 5. Homes and housing.
 6. Circular economy and waste.

¹⁵ Based on information presented at: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/topics-and-guidance/business-tax-rates-and-premises/business-rates-wales>

¹⁶ Information provided by the Applicant.

¹⁷ *All Wales Plan 2021–25, Working Together to Reach Net Zero*: Welsh Government, October 2021

7. Enriching natural resources.

- 4.11. The Plan set out pledges from individuals in Wales, to businesses and the government. The main point of action in order to reach net zero was to drastically reduce carbon emissions across all sectors. One way to do this is through the increased use of renewable energy sources to displace CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel sources, which the Proposed Development will deliver.

COP 30

- 4.12. In November 2025, world leaders met at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP30, to discuss and agree goals and strategies to reduce climate change, highlighting the increased pace of climate action. Adaption and resilience are the main focusses, integrating local solutions and maximising community capacity and ability to manage climate change risks. The Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA) encourages nature-based solutions and metric from the Race to Resilience campaign
- 4.13. Key takeaways include establishing an investment worth a trillion-dollars for grids and storage, with the target of tripling renewable capacity by 2030, quadrupling sustainable fuel by 2035 and recognising that over 437 million people became more resilient to climate change as a result of the Race to Resilience campaign¹⁸. Therefore, it is important that renewable schemes are brought forward across the UK.

Stronger, farer, greener Wales: A plan for employability and skills

- 4.14. In March 2022, the Welsh Government published their Plan for Employability and Skills¹⁹. The aim of the plan is to set out how the Welsh Government is committed to ensuring all individuals in Wales have a high-quality education, access to jobs and to ensure Wales is a place where businesses can thrive.
- 4.15. The Plan focuses on five priorities, outlined below:
1. **Young people realising their potential:** The government want to ensure that everyone under the age of 25 has access to work, education, training or self-employment. To work towards this goal there will be 125,000 new apprenticeships for people of all ages. The Proposed Development will support this by creating new employment opportunities.
 2. **Tackling economic inequality:** This aims to ensure that the employability support is available to everyone and will target those under-represented in the labour market and those in and out of work with a long-term health condition to find work and progress with their employment.
 3. **Championing fair work for all:** The Welsh government want to ensure that employers create high quality employment for all employees, improve the offer to workers and ensure they have fair employment practices.
 4. **Supporting people with a long-term health condition to work:** This aims to prevent people falling out of employment through health prevention, early intervention, healthy workplaces and maximise the role of the health service.

¹⁸ *Global Climate Change Action Agenda at COP 30: Outcomes Report*, December 2025.

¹⁹ *Stronger, farer, greener Wales: A plan for employability and skills*: Welsh Government, March 2022.

5. **Nurturing a learning for life culture:** It is the aim of the Welsh Government to reduce inequalities in education and rise the overall standards of education. They want to increase participation in the skills system for people with disabilities and ethnic minority groups, whilst tackling low qualifications and increasing the mobility of workers.

- 4.16. The regeneration plan has five priority themes, one of which is to create job opportunities in the area to grow the economy. This is something the Proposed Development will do, during both the construction phase and once it is operational.

Potential Impacts on Tourism

- 4.17. The impact of renewable energy schemes is sometimes highlighted by local residents and businesses as a concern when considering a proposed development, for example raising concerns around traffic disruption and the impact on tourism.
- 4.18. Based on data from the ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, as of 2024 in the Combined Area there are around 11,000 (7.2% of total employment) jobs supported by accommodation and food services and 5,000 (3.3% of total employment) jobs supported by the arts, entertainment, recreation and other services sectors. Tourism therefore plays an important role in supporting the local economy. When considering any potential impact the Proposed Development could have on the sector, it is helpful to look at work undertaken elsewhere on any impacts that renewable energy schemes can have on tourism.
- 4.19. In 2013, a survey of 1,000 holidaymakers in Cornwall explored the extent to which solar and wind farms impact on whether people would visit the area. The survey was commissioned by Good Energy, a renewable energy supplier, and carried out during the peak holiday month of August. The main findings to emerge from the research were that²⁰:
 - More than nine out of ten (94%) respondents said the presence of solar and wind farms would make no difference to their decision to visit Cornwall again.
 - Poor weather (17%) and the cost of holidaying (14%) were the largest deterrents to holidaymakers, with only 2% of those surveyed citing the presence of solar and wind farms as a reason to be less likely to visit Cornwall.
 - Only 7% of those surveyed said that the presence of solar farms had a negative impact on their visit.
- 4.20. In another study published in 2014, Regeneris Consulting and The Tourism Company looked at the potential economic impact of onshore wind farms and associated grid infrastructure on the Welsh Tourism Sector²¹. Findings from the study include:
 - Wind farms have been an established presence on the local landscape in areas such as Powys, IACC and the South Wales Valleys. Case study analysis of these areas (including consultation with local tourism trade associations and local authority tourism officers) revealed little evidence of significant impacts on tourism. The majority of consultees believed there had been no impact on overall visitor numbers.

²⁰ <https://www.economicvoice.com/wind-and-solar-farms-are-accepted-part-of-landscape-say-holidaymakers-in-cornwall/>

²¹ *Study into the Potential Economic Impact of Wind Farms and Associated Grid Infrastructure on the Welsh Tourism Sector*. Regeneris Consulting & The Tourism Company, February 2014.

- While visitor responses and reactions to wind farms are highly subjective, the evidence indicates that a clear majority of people do not react negatively to wind farm developments or change their visiting behaviour as a result.
- Disruption during the construction phase can be an annoyance for visitors and also businesses. The study found no evidence that it had deterred visitors, however it did note that such disruption should be minimised or mitigated through the planning process.

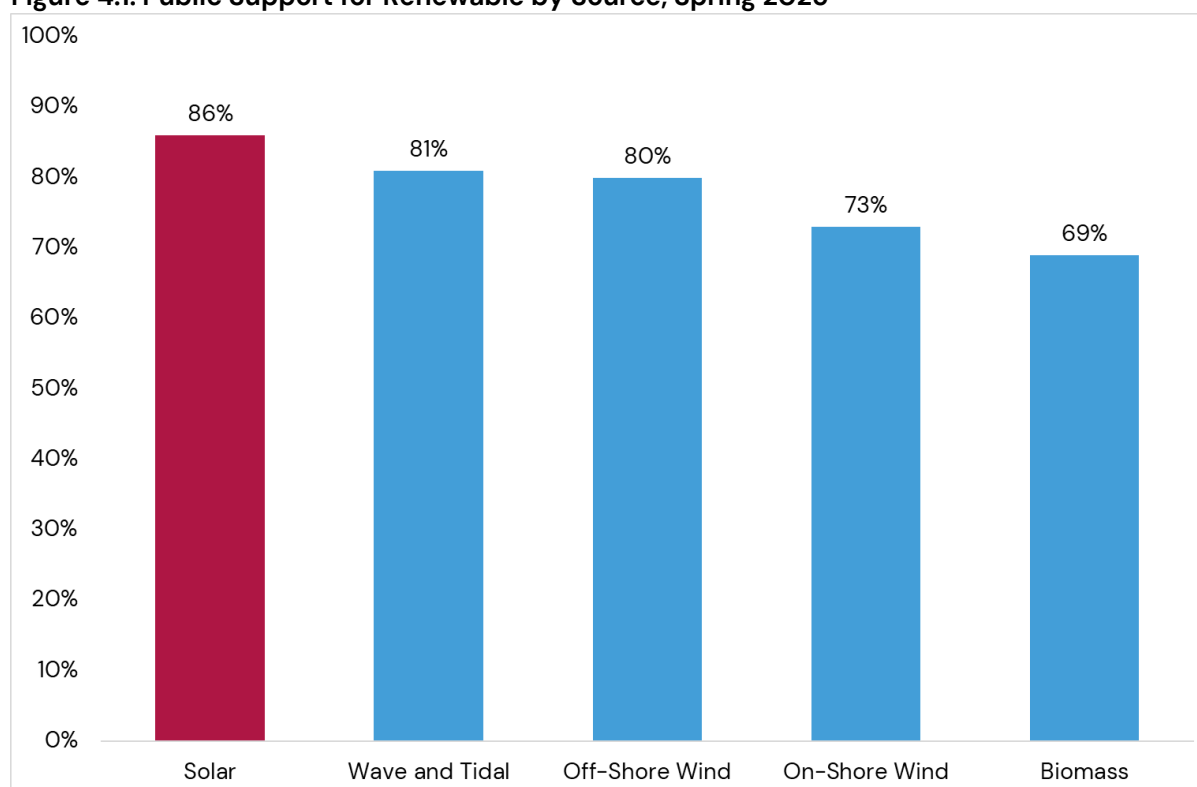
4.21. The analysis presented above indicates that solar and wind farms do not have any major negative impacts on tourism, with the presence of such schemes not appearing to significantly influence the decision to visit an area.

Public Attitude Towards Renewable Energy

4.22. Findings from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (formerly BEIS) Public Attitude Tracker found that in Summer 2025, 80% of the UK public supported renewable energy and this has remained stable since Spring 2025²².

4.23. It also found that of the renewable energy sources included in the Spring 2025²³ tracker, solar had the highest public support at 86% (Figure 4.1 shows this in more detail).

Figure 4.1: Public Support for Renewable by Source, Spring 2025



Source: DESNZ Public Attitude Tracker

²² DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker: Renewable energy, Summer 2025, UK, October 2025.

²³ The most recent data for 'support for different types of renewables' is from Spring 2025.

4.24. Research published in 2025 by Copper Consultancy²⁴ for Solar Energy UK presents the results of a survey into public attitudes to solar farm development. The main findings are summarised below:

- Support for solar is increasing with 77% of individuals supporting the development of solar energy in their local energy, whilst 55% say they are becoming more supportive of solar energy.
- Over half of respondents agreed with the following statement: “Given the need to hit out net zero targets, solar energy should be prioritised in national planning decisions.”.
- The majority of respondents strongly believe the local communities should benefit from solar development by job creation, skills and supply chain opportunities or by giving benefits back into the community.

²⁴ 2025 – Support continues to grow for solar. A study of public attitudes to solar development. Copper Consultancy, 2025.

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