

## South East Major Projects Skills Webinar

The South East is planning for and experiencing infrastructure and housing development at a scale that will support major strides in the economic growth and future prosperity of the region. SELEP has formed a South East Major Projects Group, made up of the headline, large scale developments in the South East, who share common opportunities and challenges in their delivery and operation.

An overview of our major projects can be found [here](#):

Understanding the collective skills requirements and recruitment needs is fundamental in realising the social and economic benefits of these transformational projects. The Major Projects Skills Webinar brought all major projects and key stakeholders together to discuss these opportunities and help inform a shared action plan. Skills related information from the projects is and will be shared on SELEP's Skills website [here](#).

This short paper notes the headline points that emerged, alongside a snapshot of the Q&As from our stakeholders

### Headline Points (by agenda item)

#### **Louise Aitken, SELEP Skills Lead provided a SELEP perspective of skills and employment for the region, outlining**

- The work of the employer led Skills Advisory Panel
- The newly published [SELEP Skills Report](#)
- Vision and priorities for skills in SELEP region
- Key skills challenges faced in the region
- Our significant progress to date, including:
  - £69m+capital investment in facilities to ensure responsive to industry need
  - £80m European Social funding supporting people into and in work + recent [£2m Pathways to employment for young people Call](#)
  - South East Skills Website: [www.southeastskills.org.uk](http://www.southeastskills.org.uk)
- And our upcoming plans to:
  - Deliver our £4.4m Covid-19 Recovery Fund supporting individuals and businesses
  - Articulate growth areas outlined in Skills Report/ evidence base – Skills festival 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October and themed, webinars planned – e.g. the future of work
  - Develop a shared action plan with our major projects and building on the forthcoming MACE Report

**Richard Dinsdale of the MACE Group provided an overview of the Forthcoming report on the collective skills and employment needs across the Major Projects**

This reported was commissioned by SELEP to inform the Skills Advisory Panel Evidence Base to:

- 1) Understand what the major projects are in the SE region
- 2) Understand the current workforce picture & demographics of the region
- 3) Understand the required future workforce requirements
- 4) Undertake gap analysis research of the required trained workforce
- 5) Develop a series of recommendations needed in order to develop a trained and sustainable workforce in order to meet the project requirements

This specialised research includes:

- A skills demand modelling methodology which includes a review of major projects to assess their value, delivery timescales for pre- construction/construction/operation, skill sets required at each stage, job number estimates, skills requirements by year and skills matching.
- Skills supply analysis to understand in detail what is needed for the region and by project.
- Research and engagement with educational and training establishments
- Skills supply solution and strategy for each project / sub region

To put the scale of these major projects into perspective, Richard shared some preliminary estimates for total job requirements:

2021/2024: 59,175

2025/2028: 97,210

2029/2038: 67,113

2039 +: 20,405

The final report will be published on the MPG pages of the [SELEP](#) and [Skills websites](#).

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**An overview of some of the major projects and their forthcoming skills and employment needs were provided by:**

Bradwell B

Ebbsfleet Garden City

Freeport East

London Resort

Lower Thames Crossing

Please select the recording to view these presentations [here](#).

### **Key Points from the presentations:**

- The scale of opportunities for each is vast – but collectively is historically significant.
- Time scales differ greatly between projects and particular skills needs and employment opportunities will adjust over time, via planning, construction and delivery phases.
- With careful scoping, benefits can be shared within and between projects, lessons can be learned and skills shortages can be managed. This is only possible through long term planning and this is why the Major Project Group Skills subgroup is so useful.
- Regeneration, job creation and skills provision are centre to all projects, with many located near to economically deprived areas – a positive economic impact on the local communities from initiation to legacy is key.
- There is an emphasis on encouraging local benefits via supply chains and working collaboratively with SMEs
- As well as the MACE commission referenced above, the major projects have their own evidence-based strategies, outlining their commitments and approach to skills and employment from short to long term.
- Partnership working remains crucial in the success of these projects. For long- and short-term planning, schools, further and higher education links are essential to ensure skills requirements are fulfilled. Partners such as local authorities, DWP, the Careers Enterprise Company, National Careers Service and others will also play a key vital role in resourcing and outlining the particular requirements and opportunities for the local communities.
- The scale of these developments means that local infrastructure will be transformed and creating modern and sustainable methods of transportation to facilitate both construction and operation is essential.
- From the perspective of garden communities, these projects are not just about mass construction and house building. They are creating communities and neighbourhoods with individual identities - incorporating education, health, employment and community facilities.

### **Further scheme headlines from the Hoo Peninsular & Public Health England (not covered at this session)**

#### **Hoo Peninsular: Medway**

- Medway Council has secured £170 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to invest in improving transport and environmental infrastructure on the Hoo Peninsula in the next few years.
- HIF is focused on significantly improving the Hoo Peninsula's transport connections and the environmental infrastructure and having them all delivered and in use by 2024.

- This funding package supports the delivery of the essential infrastructure proposals which will enable emerging proposals for 10,600 homes to come forward
- Significant investment will have been made to create a network of wildlife-rich open spaces. All with extensive walking and cycling routes, new habitats and a green 'living bridge' over the Peninsula Way and new wetlands by the estuary
- To be kept informed and updated on the project sign up to:  
[https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKMEDWAY/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=UKMEDWAY\\_182](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKMEDWAY/subscriber/new?topic_id=UKMEDWAY_182) or visit <https://www.medway.gov.uk/futurehoo>

### Public Health England: Harlow

- Public Health England's science campus and headquarters will ultimately see up to 2,750 staff based at the site by 2031, following a phased opening from 2025.
- Scientists and technicians will be the largest group of staff working at PHE Harlow but we will also need people with a wide range of other skills ranging from: Finance, human resources (HR), communications, marketing, security, maintenance, catering, administration
- Conversations have begun to help develop their future workforce. Links have been established with local schools, colleges and universities to consider training opportunities and apprenticeships.
- Further information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phe-harlow-science-hub-proposals>
- A video is also available to [view here](#).

SELEP is keen to provide more virtual sessions with Major Projects and will roll these out over the coming year, focusing on particular aspects of skills and employment. **Hoo Peninsular, Thames Freeport and Public Health England will be covered more fully at a future session.**

### Panel Question and Answer session

#### Can you outline the main challenges & opportunities by project?

*Bradwell B – Opportunities are huge for Essex and the region and there is a chance to learn from other nuclear projects. Vast and diverse skills requirements but these must be realised locally. The challenge is timing and setting a pipeline as to when these skills are needed.*

*Ebbsfleet Garden City - local residents being given the opportunities for jobs is a prime focus as is building aspirations of young people. There is a challenge in the perception of construction, but the project presents significant opportunities for professional services as well as traditional skills associated and they are keen to create awareness for all the different roles available.*

*For Freeport East, creating aspirations and training within areas of deprivation is a challenge and the broad range of skills needed and scope for new technologies presents significant opportunities, some of which may not be realised yet.*

*London Resort noted their focus on their operational phase. They will provide long term opportunities for careers in hospitality and can provide a leading culture of best practice. Challenge wise, they aim to break down the perceptions of careers in hospitality to demonstrate the great deal of prospects.*

*The Lower Thames Crossing stated that challenges short term includes a loss of confidence re Covid-19 for businesses. Longer term, upskilling initiatives to maximise local opportunities will also be a challenge and they will need to support existing provisions to minimise potential skills gaps. If they are granted to build, timing will enable them to prepare a pipeline, engage with SME directories or provide training / upskilling locally.*

*Richard Dinsdale of MACE noted that their report will be completed in a few weeks. He observed that alongside the discussions today, the focus and commitment for net zero in the UK will have an impact on everything and we must be ready to embrace this overarching change.*

## **Key questions & Answers noted in Zoom Q&A facility**

### **What is classed as local for jobs (question for Bradwell B)**

*Local is essentially those who will work on the project with a daily commute. We use a modelling boundary of 90 minutes, but the majority of people would come from much nearer to the site on the Dengie in reality. We'll be working to help ensure local people and businesses are best placed to maximise the opportunities.*

**Anecdotally, schemes like Hinckley have pulled workforce from all over the country (and indeed internationally). At one level, major projects - depending on phasing - provide almost guaranteed work for some professionals for years to come. But how many new opportunities will they provide for a more locally-based workforce rather than simply transfer Hinckley workforce to Bradwell, for instance? (question for Bradwell B)**

*To date we've identified about 3000 of the 9000 direct roles at peak construction at BRB would be from the local area. At HPC it's a similar story with 36% of roles to date going to local people. Ultimately, it's much more sustainable for the project to have a significant proportion of local people on the project - hence development of skills locally will be key to ensure people have the chance to take the opportunity. The project will work together with partners to take a direct role in delivering this.*

**For London Resort - great to see the commitment to career development in tourism and hospitality. London Resort will be a flagship employer in the Kent tourism sector and your vision and ambition to create high quality local jobs is commendable.**

**Job opportunities for major key delivery partners (client, consultants, designer and main contractors) will not be easy to track for one to see and apply. Will there be a link to those job opportunities advertised by delivery partners be provided in [www.southeastskills.org.uk](http://www.southeastskills.org.uk) website? (for SELEP)**

*Hi, this is certainly something we're looking at and adding to our new South East Skills site ([southeastskills.org.uk](http://southeastskills.org.uk)). This will be something we'll explore for our shared action plan too. There are also some local sites such as [Essex Opportunities](#) and [Thurrock Opportunities](#) which it'll be important to link with also.*

#### **Further Q & A responses provided by Lower Thames Crossing**

**Can you please explain what you mean by sustainable benefits for local communities**

*By sustainable benefits we mean those that support long term existing needs and priorities. The rest of the LTC presentation went on to talk about our objectives and our approach. Further detail on the Skills, Education and Employment strategy will be communicated later this year.*

**What is the current estimated economic benefit of the proposed LTC?**

*Lower Thames Crossing's most conservative estimates project we will add billions to the economy. We will be updating our figures and publicising them later this year*

**Statement around LTC value**

*The official overall value for the project is estimated between £6.4Bn - £8.2Bn.*