

**APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING STRATEGY**

**Condition 29 (Apprenticeships and Training Opportunities)**

**SYMMETRY PARK, OXFORD**

**LPA Ref; 22/01144/F**

**July 2023**

## **BACKGROUND**

This document has been prepared by Buckingham Group Contracting Ltd to discharge **Planning Condition 29 (Apprenticeships and Training Opportunities) of Application No. 22/01144F.**

### **Description of development:**

*'Full planning application for the erection of a new high quality combined research, development and production facility comprising of Class B2 floorspace and ancillary office floorspace with associated infrastructure including: formation of signal-controlled vehicular access to the A41 and repositioning of existing bus stops; ancillary workshops; staff gym and canteen; security gate house; a building for use as an energy centre (details of the energy generation reserved for future approval); loading bays; service yard; waste management area; external plant; vehicle parking; landscaping including permanent landscaped mounds; sustainable drainage details; together with the demolition of existing agricultural buildings within the red line boundary; and the realignment of an existing watercourse'.... At Symmetry Park, Oxford North.*

### **Condition 29 (Apprenticeships and Training Opportunities) reads:**

*'No development above ground level shall take place until a strategy has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority which sets out how Apprenticeships and Training Opportunities will be encouraged to be provided during the construction phase.*

*Prior to the first occupation and prior to the occupation of any subsequent occupiers of the building, a further strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which sets out how Apprenticeships and Training Opportunities will be encouraged to be provided by the occupiers of the unit.*

*The strategies shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.*

*Reason: In the interests of ensuring appropriate and adequate apprenticeships are made available in accordance with policy BSC7 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, the Council's SPD on Developer Contributions (2018) and Government guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.'*

## **CONSTRUCTION PHASE - APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING STRATEGY**

### **Introduction**

Buckingham Group Contracting Ltd (BGCL) have been employed by Tritax Symmetry to build the shell only facility along with external hard & soft landscaping.

It is our intention to work with all parties, to generate as many employment and training opportunities where possible throughout this Construction Phase of the Project.

### **Training and Learning**

BGCL's Future Skills Team will discuss the training needs of students with local colleges, universities and other education and development providers and advise on opportunities on offer to meet these needs. Training can be given either at the education premises or on site.

We will work with Oxfordshire's Career Hub (Career and Enterprise Company) CEC to use their expertise of requirements of education engagement in the area.

We will specifically engage with the following Schools and Colleges:

Whitelands Academy	2 miles (Bicester)
The Bicester School	4 miles from site (Bicester)
The Cooper School	6 miles from site (Bicester)
Heyford Park School	8 miles from site (Heyford)
Bicester Construction College (A&W College)	5 miles from site
ACE Training (further education provider)	9 miles from site.

To help facilitate the latter, BGCL will provide an on-site training room 6m by 6m, as part of the office accommodation set up, which can be utilised by the colleges and other providers as required on a pre-arranged basis. We will also liaise with Bicester Construction College regarding their PV Installation Course and organise a site visit to witness the PV and EV charger installation.

We envisage this being one session per academic term for each provider/educational establishment. We will aim to facilitate one on-site activity per term dependent upon the phase of development. Ideally through academic year 2023/24 – After October half term; after February half term and after Easter.

Many schools schedule work experience to take place at the end of the academic year, which might not fit with programme delivery. Thus, we will work with the CEC to source T Level students who need a host to satisfy their work experience requirements.

We will also engage with DWP to discuss the possibility of supporting a construction specific Sector Based Work Academy that will help local unemployed people into sustainable employment. Agencies that provide us with site resource will support us in the delivery of this.

Site walk rounds will be arranged with students, using safely managed routes and site staff supervision. These can be arranged in advance at set key milestones within the programme of works. This would include groundworks, steelworks, cladding and concrete slabs as a suggestion.

Whilst on site the trainees will have the opportunity for the following training elements to take place:

Setting out, Measuring, Level taking, Reviewing and reading drawings and Health, Safety and Environmental. This would be undertaken by our own Future Skills Team, aided by the site-based construction staff.

We have limited fitout works due to the nature of the contract, but there are brickwork and electrical contractors, for which we could request mock up panels and wiring boards to be provided as part of their works. These would require advanced notice and would only be available during the period that the trades are actually undertaking work on site.

The attendees will be required to always wear suitable footwear but would be provided with hard hats, hi viz vests, gloves and glasses. BGCL's Future Skills Team will liaise with the local colleges and other providers to inform them of dates available for them to attend site to carry out the on- site training.

### **Apprenticeships**

BGCL employ apprentices both directly through their Future Skills Apprentice Scheme and via our Project based Supply Chain.

Buckingham Group are one of the first contractors in the UK to progress the L4 Site Supervisor Flexi Apprenticeship pilot with a cohort of 13 starting in the business during September 2022 including one recruited for and still retained at Symmetry Park Kettering. All 13 staff have had their initial 6-month fixed term contract extended and are currently employed on our sites.

BGCL will provide 3no. Apprentices bases full time on site for the duration of our works from our Future Skills Apprentice Scheme.

We will also ensure that our Supply Chain provide 3no. Apprentices within their workforce for the respective duration of their works. These are likely to be the structural steelwork, groundworks and roofing works. These would equate to approximately 7.5% of the peak labour figure of 80 people.

We will support the CEC during National Apprentice Week to promote apprenticeships as a career option. Consideration will be given to site visits for the community as and where appropriate and we will use the steering group members to help facilitate this.

### **Social and Economic Values**

BGCL will employ local trades directly such as General Labourers, Gatemen, Security Guards, Cleaners and Forklift Drivers.

Materials ordered by BGCL and our Supply Chain such as concrete, stone, timber, paving, tarmac, blockwork and ad hoc materials from Builders Merchants are sourced locally and make up a considerable total of the value of the works.

With the help of the steering group members, we can be made aware of local volunteering initiatives, community groups needing support and charitable organisations.

## Monitoring and Reporting

BGCL will monitor and report monthly upstream to our Business and to Tritax Symmetry the actual figures achieved for Apprentices, Training and Local Spend. We are able to report on the matrix identified below and will do so on a quarterly basis. We will report such measures using a 30-mile guideline but will also provide Oxfordshire specific details.

1. Total amount £ spent in local supply chain (spend with Oxfordshire only businesses or social enterprise)
2. No. of FTE hired or retained for duration of contract (Oxfordshire employees only)
3. Total amount £ spent with Oxfordshire Social Enterprise Companies –
4. No. of staff hours spent on local school and college visits (includes preparation and travel)
5. No of weeks of apprenticeships completed on the development site
6. No of weeks of training opportunities (BTEC, NVQ, HNC training)
7. No of meaningful work placements (min. 5 days)
8. Value of donation to social enterprises/charities
9. No of staff hours voluntarily donated to support charities or social enterprises
10. Value of donations to other employment, training, skills and education projects (Schools, further education colleges, adult learning)

We will meet on a quarterly basis with the steering group which will consist of OxLep, DWP, Bicester Vision, A&W College and other organisations suggested by OxLep. Suggested dates for these meetings are as below.

w/c 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
w/c 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
w/c 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024  
w/c 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

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Please see the attached forms and process that we use to report against, along with examples of our company achievements.

## Appendices

Appendix 01 – Future Skills including Service Level Agreements  
Appendix 02 – BGCL Education  
Appendix 03 – BGCL Community  
Appendix 04 – Employment & Skills Plan (ESP) Guide for Supply Chain  
Appendix 05 – Employment & Skills Quarterly Returns  
Appendix 06 – Social Value Summary Report