

Job Destruction from Dismantling the UK's Climate Action Policy Framework

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Summary

- Climate and net zero¹ policy now represents a significant dividing line in UK politics, with hostility from Reform UK and the Conservative Party, and support from all other major parties.
- Reform UK has committed to eliminating public spending on climate action and net zero, introducing a hostile regulatory environment for renewable energy, cancelling existing government contracts, and removing regulation that drives the uptake of low carbon measures.
- Removing all government funding to deliver climate action and achieve net zero targets, and reversing a net-zero supportive policy framework, would in the short-term lead to **job destruction in the UK for almost 500,000 people** directly and indirectly employed in low carbon industries. This figure does not include jobs lost from reduced spend in local economies.
- In the medium term, removing climate action and net zero funding and supportive policies would lead to **the destruction of 1.4 million jobs in the UK** that could otherwise be created or sustained by low carbon industries on a net zero pathway.
- The short-term impact on the UK economy would be severe, with national direct job destruction equivalent to those experienced by Thatcher's assault on coal mining communities in the 1980s. This quantitative analysis shows that Reform's plans threaten a further assault on British working communities.
- The impact would be severe as:
 - "Net zero" covers multiple sectors and industries, from energy to automotive to infrastructure and land management. Anchor industries in these sectors support large supply chains of small and medium-sized companies.

¹ "Net zero" is the policy agenda to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050, by cutting emissions across all sectors and balancing any remaining emissions with removals.

This analysis was commissioned from Transition Economics by Oil Change UK and Friends of the Earth Scotland

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- There has been policy consensus since the 1990s on reducing carbon emissions, accelerating since the 2008 Climate Change Act, and companies have spent many years investing in technology, products and skills to sell into the low carbon economy. This is matched by decades of public investment in infrastructure. A sudden and extreme change in direction would therefore be highly disruptive, leaving ports with no trade, suppliers with no customers, and skilled workers with no employers.
- Low carbon industries are one of few growth areas in a UK industrial base that has been starved of investment and subjected to decades of long-term decline. Ditching a growth industry would leave limited opportunities for companies to find new customers and redeploy capacity if the low carbon economy was shuttered.
- Of the UK nations, Scotland would be disproportionately hit, with 13% of job losses in the short term (from a population that is 8% of the UK whole).
- The impact of job losses would be concentrated in towns and regions with industrial heritage and limited alternative economic geographic opportunities.
- Particularly at-risk areas include North East England, East Anglia, the West Midlands and Inverness and the North East Highlands.
- The low carbon economy is a high growth sector, both in the UK and overseas, and the UK is well positioned to take advantage of it, due to its industrial legacy and being an “early mover” in low carbon technologies. The lost benefits from squandering this opportunity are therefore very large, and would increase over time.

Introduction

In 2019 the UK was the first national parliament to declare a Climate Emergency,² and the UK's net zero emissions targets were enshrined in law³, extending the climate targets established in 2008. This was part of a broad climate consensus established over decades within politics, delivered under Conservative and Labour governments. Since then, and with a particular inflection point in 2022, that consensus has fractured.⁴ Climate action and support for Net Zero now represents a significant dividing line in UK politics, with hostility towards it from the Conservative Party and Reform UK on one side, and all other major parties on the other.

While analysis has been undertaken on the potential for “green job” creation from climate action under a net zero policy trajectory, there has been less analysis of the potential for job destruction from removing existing government funding and supportive policy frameworks for reducing carbon emissions.⁵ This report fills that gap by reviewing the jobs that already exist in the net zero economy, and modelling the impact on those jobs of the UK government suddenly reversing course.

As Reform UK is the largest political party hostile to net zero, and most consistently hostile to net zero, this report takes their policy platform as a starting point. We assess the impact on jobs of eliminating £30 billion of annual public spending on net zero, repealing existing renewable energy subsidies, and creating an explicitly hostile environment for new clean energy infrastructure.

Our approach is to take Reform UK's public statements at face value, interpret their policy implications across individual sectors of the UK economy, and model both the short-term and medium-term employment impacts of a wholesale reversal of the net zero policy framework. We use the following definitions:

- **Short-term job losses:** jobs which currently exist that would be lost within 1-3 years of dismantling the UK's net zero policy framework. Jobs reliant on project-based investments would be lost almost immediately (e.g. retrofit, new renewables build out, port upgrades) whereas jobs based in manufacturing hubs (e.g. EV and battery manufacturing) would take longer to erode as companies implement relocation options.
- **Medium-term job losses:** jobs which would exist in the mid-to-late 2030s in a net zero scenario, which would not exist if the UK's net zero policy framework was dismantled. This includes a combination of jobs lost which currently exist and that would continue to exist under a net zero trajectory through to 2040, and the failure to materialise of future jobs which are expected to be created in the low carbon economy before 2040.

² <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48126677>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-becomes-first-major-economy-to-pass-net-zero-emissions-law>

⁴ <https://www.ippr.org/articles/apathy-and-opposition>

⁵ <https://neweconomics.org/2025/05/the-cost-of-reform-uks-anti-environmental-policies>

Research questions:

- 1. What impact would cutting all government spending and support to renewable energy and low carbon sectors have on existing clean energy and related supply chain jobs in the UK?
- 2. Provide a breakdown of jobs at risk in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and explore impacts in 3-4 localised case studies
- 3. What impact would it have on potential future jobs, by comparing to existing estimates of jobs that would be created by current or more ambitious transition policies?

Reform UK’s policies on net zero and the environment

Reform UK’s policy platform on net zero can be summarised as cutting £30bn of annual public spending on net zero projects and climate action, introducing a new tax on renewable energy generation, removing energy efficiency requirements on landlords, removing support for electric vehicles and the phase out of petrol and diesel vehicle sales, scrapping high speed rail projects, and restricting new power grid infrastructure. We present key public statements below by leading Reform politicians and Reform publications, and their policy implications.⁶

Reform statement	Implication
“Save” the public sector £30bn per year by “ditching net zero”. Redirect £17bn of this to fund the NHS. ⁷	Eliminate £30bn of annual central governmental revenue and capital expenditure on net zero and related policy areas.
[Referring to government awarded contracts to supply renewable electricity at fixed prices] “We don’t want you signing big long contracts at ever higher bills. You are on notice that we do not consider your contracts from here on	Repudiate existing contracts for renewable energy subsidies that are funded through on-bill levies.

⁶ Reform has committed to other more targeted policies to roll back net zero than those listed here, such as blocking large-scale solar & battery storage, making farmers with solar panels on their land ineligible for inheritance tax relief, and preventing the Bank of England from considering climate change as part of its remit. However, we do not consider that these policies would create additional impacts on the economy, when considered alongside Reform’s other pledges, and therefore we do not consider their separate impact as part of this analysis. For example, where there is no new utility scale solar power developed, the inheritance tax relief policy becomes moot

⁷ Reform 2024 manifesto page 8
https://assets.nationbuilder.com/reformuk/pages/253/attachments/original/1718625371/Reform_UK_Our_Contract_with_You.pdf?1718625371 See also https://www.lbc.co.uk/article/scrab-net-zero-target-fund-nhs-reform-event-5Hjch7r_2/ and <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/apr/08/reform-uk-criticised-for-claiming-funding-nhs-and-reaching-net-zero-are-at-odds>

valid....Do we want these big subsidy contracts anymore? Let's just rip it up.” ⁸	
Introduce a "generation tax" and a "special corporation tax" on renewable generation. ⁹ “If we do what we say, we recover give or take £10 billion a year. That’s about three to £350 per household per year” ¹⁰	Introduce a tax/taxes on renewable energy generators raising £10 billion per year.
“Reform UK will remove the coercion on homeowners relating to energy efficiency expenditure”. ¹¹	The UK has no laws directing owner-occupiers to upgrade their home’s energy efficiency. The government only compels investment from homeowners when they are landlords - to achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of E (EPC E is a below average energy efficiency rating), rising to C from 2030. Interpret Reform policy as removing minimum energy efficiency standards for landlords.
“No more bans on petrol and diesel cars and no legal requirements for manufacturers to sell electric cars” ¹²	Ending the 2030 ban on pure internal combustion engine vehicles sales, and ending the electric vehicle (EV) mandate on manufacturers.
Scrap high-speed rail projects HS2 and Northern Power House Rail ¹³ . Leave unfinished infrastructure as a “testament to British incompetence” ¹⁴	Clear
With respect to new grid infrastructure: “We will attack, we will hinder, we will delay, we will obstruct, we will put every hurdle in your way. It’s going to cost you a fortune, and you’re not going to win. So give up and go away.” ¹⁵	Use the planning system and other measures to restrict new power grid infrastructure
“Overhaul and merge the National Infrastructure Commission and the Infrastructure Bank. Scrap Net Zero objectives.” ¹⁶	Eliminate National Wealth Fund (formerly UK Infrastructure Bank) financing of net zero projects.

⁸ Richard Tice, September 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nL1cNQaPqk>

⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn93w44yv74o>

¹⁰ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/reform-britain-government-london-greenpeace-b2697081.html>

¹¹ <https://reformuk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Reform-NY-Energy-Policy.pdf>

¹² Reform 2024 Manifesto page 17

¹³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c24mr6d1d0o>

¹⁴ <https://inews.co.uk/news/inside-reforms-plans-scrap-hs2-northern-powerhouse-rail-3908351>

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk>

¹⁶

Interpretation of policies

We take Reform UK's public statements on policy at face value wherever possible.

However, the party's commitment to save the public sector £30bn per year by "ditching net zero" does not accurately reflect the baseline with respect to public spending on net zero, so requires interpretation.

Reform UK has stated that it can save "£30 billion of taxpayers cash" from scrapping net zero, and claims that analysis by the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) and Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) confirms this.¹⁷

According to the OBR, "the total fiscal cost of the net zero transition in our central scenario is an estimated... £30 billion a year on average."¹⁸ However, two thirds of this is assumed losses of fuel duty and other tax revenue as vehicles move from petrol and diesel to electric. It is therefore not "public spending" that could be cut.

The actual OBR estimate for existing UK government net-zero spending is approximately £12 billion per year, and this includes funding for nuclear power, which Reform UK has said it would continue to support.¹⁹

We estimate that taking this departmental spend and adding international climate finance (which we assume Reform UK would remove²⁰) and net zero relevant investments by Great British Energy and the National Wealth Fund (NWF) totals approximately £17 billion. This total falls to £13 billion of annual spend and investments available to cut if Reform preserves nuclear spending.

While they are not explicitly "net zero" projects, it is also possible to model short-term savings of £8.6 billion per year from cancelling high-speed rail expansions HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail and the TransPennine Route Upgrade.

To achieve a £30 billion annual saving requires much deeper cuts, eliminating areas of public spend that Reform has not specifically listed. We assume that, to achieve the £30bn of public

¹⁷ Richard Tice, September 2025: "I said net zero was costing 30 billion of taxpayers cash, they scratched their head. They said, "No no, no, Ty. You're not right there." A year later, the OBR caught up with us. And they did their numbers and they came up with guess what? 30 billion. Even our old friends at the climate change committee, they're not our friends by the way. They said give or take, it's a similar number."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nL1cNQaPqk>

¹⁸ https://obr.uk/docs/dlm_uploads/Fiscal-risks-and-sustainability-report-July-2025.pdf page 112

¹⁹ <https://obr.uk/box/comparisons-to-spending-review-2025/>

²⁰ Reform UK state they will cap overseas aid at £1bn per year <https://www.reformparty.uk/policies> This would be a >90% cut on the £14bn spent on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) in 2024 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-on-international-development-final-uk-oda-spend-2024/statistics-on-international-development-final-uk-oda-spend-2024> International climate finance is provided through the ODA budget. Given Reform UK's hostility to net zero, we assume this would be entirely eliminated

spending cuts, they would need to cut climate action-related policy spend including the National Bus Fare Cap and Bus Service Improvement, tree planting and peatland restoration, a reduction in flood defence expenditure, and environmental land management schemes (the largest chunk of government subsidies to farmers and land managers).²¹

Where Reform UK has specifically stated it supports spending in a sector (e.g. nuclear power, flood defences, agricultural subsidies) we do not include these sectors in our headline estimation of job losses. However, were Reform committed to making £30bn per year available to e.g. the NHS, this would require cuts in these or other areas, or increased taxation and/or borrowing.

We note that Reform UK has stated it will scrap existing renewable energy subsidies. Environmental levies on energy bills are estimated at £14 billion per year.²² However, as these costs are paid by energy users, not government, scrapping them will not reduce public spending, or make any additional funding available for government investment in other areas of the economy.

Impact of policies on sectors of the UK economy

In the table below we summarise the impact that individual policies and combinations of policies would have on specific sectors in the UK economy, and the rationale for our analysis.

Policy	Sector	Impact	Rationale
- Introduce an annual tax on renewable generation raising £10 billion per year. - Eliminate DESNZ grants and National Wealth Fund equity/debt finance and guarantees for port upgrades related to offshore wind.	Renewable generation (fixed offshore wind, floating offshore wind, onshore wind, utility scale solar)	Eliminate installation of new renewable generation	The total revenue of the UK electricity market is £54.8bn. ²³ Revenue for renewable generation is circa £20bn. ²⁴ A “generation tax” and “special corporation tax” that raised £10bn per year would more than wipe out sector profit.
	Ports, logistics and maritime services	50% reduction in investment in UK ports	Offshore wind is one of the main drivers of port modernisation. Particularly exposed ports would include those on the Scottish East Coast, North East England, Teeside, the Humber and East Anglia. Vessel operators, maintenance and repair yards, logistics (haulage/rail) hubs, engineering/civil contracting hubs and financial and professional services hubs around ports would suffer knock-on consequences, with major localised impacts.

²¹ We note that Reform has committed to increase the farming budget to £3 billion. However, it is unclear which other areas of central government spend could reasonably be linked to net zero/environmental policy

²² https://coalition.climateaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CAC_UK_Clean_Power_Taskforce_Report-1.pdf

²³ <https://www.ibisworld.com/united-kingdom/industry/electricity-production/2235/>

²⁴ See <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/horizon/outlook/renewable-energy-market/uk> Adjusted from 28.3bn USD

Remove central government funding for power grid infrastructure upgrades and block new development through the planning system	Manufacturing and industrial supply chains	Disruption for companies supplying Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 manufactured goods (steel and heavy fabrication, cables, turbine components, electrical systems)	While most renewable technologies deployed in the UK are manufactured overseas, there are growing numbers of companies manufacturing offshore wind components, in particular turbine blades, subsea cables and steel foundations/monopiles. The sector aims to triple domestic manufacturing capacity between now and 2035. ²⁵ Eliminating new renewables would have ripple effects beyond energy projects into steel, heavy transport and marine engineering, as facilities built for high-volume output would see a large part of their pipeline removed. This would impact UK oil and gas supply chain firms that have been diversifying into renewables sectors, accelerating job losses and the erosion of the UK's skills base
	Power grid infrastructure	Significantly scaled back development of transmission and distribution grid, with no growth from baseline	The impact will be the difference between the forecast level of employment/activity required to build out a net zero capable grid to 2035, ²⁶ and the baseline level of activity/employment required to maintain existing service. ²⁷
- Eliminate funding for EV uptake and charging infrastructure, eliminate R&D support (Drive35) - Eliminate Automotive Transformation Fund - Eliminate National Wealth Fund guarantees and debt finance for gigafactories and EV manufacturing - End the 2030 ICE sales ban, ending the electric vehicle mandate	Automotive and supply chain	Major weakening of the UK automotive industry, driving relocation of major production sites overseas	A Confederation of British Industry (CBI) report on electrification in the automotive sector defines a worst-case scenario in which EV production fails to grow from current levels and fails to meet growing consumer demand in domestic and export markets, with the automotive sector's gross value added (GVA) shrinking by 73%. ²⁸ Reform's proposals are arguably worse than the "worst case scenario". Removing the overarching support for EV demand, removing support for production, and removing the regulatory floor, would undercut the UK having a competitive EV manufacturing industry. Major manufacturers including Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) and Nissan are already facing major challenges (including potential restricted access to overseas markets ²⁹) and are operating in a context of a government providing supportive frameworks for domestic consumption, technology development and materials sourcing. If that changes to a government driving an explicitly anti-EV agenda, UK operations for both companies can quickly become un-competitive and lead to operations being shut down.

²⁵ <https://www.offshorewindscotland.org.uk/news/2025/november/10/owgp-launch-industrial-growth-fund/>

²⁶ <https://www.nationalgrid.com/document/149496/download>

²⁷ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68ed65b382670806f9d5e001/network-relevant-students-research-report.pdf>

²⁸ See <https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/goxp3pn4/cbi-economics-eciu-ev-sector-report-2024.pdf>

²⁹ See e.g. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2026/mar/05/nissan-sunderland-plant-could-close-if-uk-excluded-from-made-in-europe-rules-eu>

- Eliminate the Warm Homes Plan (Warm Homes Local Grant, Boiler Upgrade Scheme, Warm Homes Social Housing Fund) - Eliminate minimum energy standards for landlords.	Construction trades, energy efficiency, heat pump installation	Dramatic reduction (>90%) in installed measures	When the Conservative/Lib Dem coalition cut back support for home energy efficiency measures in the 2010s, installation of some measures fell by over 95%. ³⁰ Owner occupiers will in most cases lack the resources to invest upfront in major energy efficiency improvements that take many years to pay for themselves (or in the case of heat pumps may not ever). Lighter touch measures such as loft insulation and cavity wall insulation will remain attractive to some owner-occupiers, but private sector renters will not be able to install, and landlords will have no incentive to install without minimum energy efficiency standards. Local Authorities and other social landlords face huge financial challenges and have relied on government grants (e.g. Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Green Homes Grant) to finance retrofit, so would dramatically reduce activity with the withdrawal of government support
End National Wealth Fund support for Local Authority led green infrastructure	Heat networks, construction, non-residential building decarbonisation, fleet decarbonisation, low carbon transport and energy planning	Cancellation of most Local Authority led infrastructure projects financed through NWF (the majority of which are net zero projects)	Access to concessional finance below standard borrowing rates is critical to enable local authorities and investment partners to commit to projects, such as heat networks, with relatively low returns on investment. NWF investments have a typical multiplier of 1:3 (unlocking £3 investment for every £1 committed). ³¹ Removing this support entirely would lead to large scale cancellation of such projects.
Repudiating/"ripping up" existing green energy subsidies, taking CfDs, Renewables Obligation, Feed-in-Tariffs, ECO, Capacity Market levies etc off bills	Debt-financed infrastructure including electricity grid, water, transport and digital	10-15% increase in the cost of debt finance for UK infrastructure, leading to a corresponding fall in investment	Cancelling legacy payments would lead to large liabilities for the UK government and legal challenge. The uncertainty created by breaching of debt covenants would ripple beyond the energy sector, leading to a repricing of all regulated infrastructure that is largely privately financed (water, grid, digital etc) to reflect political risk. Increased project costs would either lead to increased charges to the public through their bills or (more likely) a fall in total investment/development in regulated sectors.
Eliminate National Wealth Fund equity and loan investments, and DESNZ	Steel and metals, cement and concrete, pulp and paper, glass	Some sectors/processes hit very hard, others reduce investment by 10-30%	The UK government's support for an Electric Arc Furnace in Port Talbot has been critical to the development of the facility. ³² The complex, high-cost transition of British Steel's Scunthorpe site from blast furnaces to greener technology makes grants and long-term capital provided by the NWF essential. ³³ In other

³⁰ <https://www.endfuelpoverty.org.uk/energy-efficiency-improvements-drop-to-lowest-levels-since-launch-of-the-energy-company-obligation>

³¹ <https://www.nationalwealthfund.org.uk/media/eh4cn5pq/nwf-impact-report-oct-25-c4697ca8e4da4615acfd5700e9759cf4.pdf>

³² <https://www.tatasteel.com/media/newsroom/press-releases/india/2024/tata-steel-signs-500-million-grant-funding-agreement-with-uk-government-for-125-billion-green-steel-project-in-port-talbot/>

³³ <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2026-02-24/115724/> and <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/nov/16/peter-kyle-backs-electric-arc-furnaces-british-steel-scunthorpe>

grants for industrial decarbonisation			industrial sectors, loss of catalytical funding would likely slow, and potentially halt investment
Eliminate DESNZ grants and NWF finance for carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) and hydrogen	CCUS and hydrogen	Eliminate CCUS and hydrogen sectors	CCUS and hydrogen produced using CCUS or renewable electricity are not currently mature technologies capable of development at scale. Without R&D funding and public equity partnerships, demonstration projects are unlikely to achieve financial close. Given the scale of the sector, direct job losses in the immediate term will not be large.
Further cuts to achieve £30bn saving in central government expenditure (no public statement by Reform)	Bus services, bus manufacturing, cycling and walking infrastructure, tree planting and peatland restoration	7.5% reduction in bus services, 30% reduction in bus manufacturing and supply chain, reduced construction/highways sector investment proportionate to cycling/walking investment, 20% fall in forestry contracting, 50% fall in peatland restoration	Domestic demand for new bus fleets is key to the major UK bus manufacturers (Alexander Dennis, Wrightbus, Switch Mobility). We estimate that eliminating the Bus Service Improvement Fund, combined with removing the fare cap, would remove resources for transport companies to invest in new fleets, reducing revenue for manufacturers by 30%, and reducing overall service levels by 7.5%. In the land use sector, government spending is a major driver of peatland restoration activities (drain blocking teams, excavator operators, hydrological engineers, specialist upland contractors etc) and we estimate that eliminating tree planting and peatland restoration funding would lead to a 50% fall in demand. Demand for forestry services, which have a greater market beyond government spending, would fall by a lower amount.
Further cuts to achieve £30bn saving in central government expenditure (spending supported by Reform UK). Nb jobs affected in these sectors are excluded from our headline analysis	Nuclear, farming, flood defences	Cancellation of Hinkley C, small modular reactor programme, and STEP fusion programme. A 10-15% decline to the agricultural workforce (farmers, family labour, agri contractors, input suppliers, machinery and equipment providers etc). Re. flooding, reduced demand for civil engineering and specialist subcontractors	Reform UK has stated that it will continue to support new nuclear projects and increase the farming budget.³⁴ Richard Tice has called for increased spending on flood defences³⁵ and a Reform council has reallocated climate mitigation funds to flood defence.³⁶ However, funding for nuclear power is a large proportion of the current government's net zero departmental spending (c. £4 billion of £12bn), and it is unclear how Reform will achieve £30bn savings in net zero/environmental spending, without eating into allocations for flood defence and environmental land management payments to farmers that replaced Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments when the UK left the EU. Development of the UK's nuclear energy and flood defence capacity is entirely reliant on government expenditure, and subsidies comprise a significant proportion of agricultural

³⁴ Reform Manifesto pages 8 and 18

https://assets.nationbuilder.com/reformuk/pages/253/attachments/original/1718625371/Reform_UK_Our_Contract_with_You.pdf?1718625371

³⁵ <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2125294/reform-uk-warns-fens-flooding>

³⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cyvj086m046o>

			income. Reform UK will therefore have to set out how it plans to fund nuclear power, flood defences and an increased farming budget, while saving £30bn in net zero/environmental expenditure.
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Impact on UK-wide jobs

The impacts identified above would have a devastating short-term³⁷ impact on employment in the UK. We have modelled the direct job losses in the low carbon economy at 209,000. This is a comparable scale nationally to the loss of coal mining jobs in the UK between 1980 and 1990,³⁸ or as if every job in a city the size of Liverpool vanished.

Table 1: Short-term Direct & Indirect Job Destruction from Reform UK policies

	Direct jobs destroyed	Indirect jobs destroyed	Total job destruction
Retrofit and heat pump installation	33700	32000	65700
HS2	33000	40500	73500
EV and battery manufacturing	23800	59500	83300
Water, digital, grid and other infrastructure	21300	26100	47400
New utility scale solar	14200	6900	21100
Net zero power grid build out	11100	18500	29600
New offshore wind	10900	10000	20900
Local Authority led low carbon infrastructure	8200	10300	18500
Bus services	8000	4300	12300
Port upgrades	7600	9500	17100
New onshore wind	6900	5700	12600
Cycling and walking infrastructure	6700	13400	20100
Industrial decarbonisation	5000	10000	15000
Transpennine	5000	6100	11100

³⁷ We define short-term job losses as jobs which currently exist that would be lost within 1-3 years of dismantling the UK's net zero policy framework. Jobs reliant on project-based investments would be lost almost immediately (e.g. retrofit, new renewables build out, port upgrades) whereas jobs based in manufacturing hubs (e.g. EV and battery manufacturing) would take longer to erode as companies implement relocation options

³⁸ <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/employment-in-the-coal-industry-in-the-united-kingdom>

Bus manufacturing	4300	13000	17300
Tree planting and peatland restoration	2600	1100	3700
Other renewables	2500	1500	4000
New EV charging infrastructure	1400	2100	3500
Floating offshore wind	1100	1500	2600
Small scale solar and battery installation	1000	1000	2000
Hydrogen	500	300	800
CCUS	400	200	600
Total	209,200	273,500	482,700
Potential losses from further cuts to reach £30bn public spending cuts			
Small modular reactors cancelled	6000	3000	9000
STEP cancelled	5800	7300	13100
Sizewell C cancelled	5600	1200	6800
Farming and countryside programme	73600	0	73600
Flood defences	3700	4600	8300

Indirect job losses (i.e. in supply chains - companies selling products and services into low carbon industries), at over 270,000, would have an even greater impact. This is because “net zero” is not a single sector or activity that can be easily isolated from the rest of the economy. Individual sectors like EV manufacturing and offshore wind draw on and develop the UK’s manufacturing, infrastructure, applied science, engineering and services base.

In the context of a shrinking UK industrial base after years of being starved of investment, the low carbon economy offers a combination of multiple anchor industries that support wide swathes of the UK economy, and removing these anchor industries would trigger destructive ripple effects.

The overall economic shock could be greater than the shuttering of the coal mines in the 1980s, as the sector had been shrinking with falling investment in the UK since the 1960s. In contrast, low carbon industries are growing at pace in the UK and globally, with companies having spent two decades investing in new technology, products and services to sell into that market. At the individual business level, a sudden loss of that market would undercut years of R&D, business planning, skills development and investment in capacity. At the regional level, it would undercut years of economic development strategy and investment. For example, ports which have mobilised major upgrades to service booming offshore energy projects, with new capacity

benefiting other sectors too, would be left with stranded assets. The combined effect would remove the benefits and advantages the UK economy enjoys from both its industrial legacy and being an “early mover” in low carbon technologies.

Given the growth in low carbon industries, the introduction of a hostile environment towards new technologies would have a greater impact in 2030 than in 2026, and a greater impact in 2035 than 2030.

We model that in the medium term,³⁹ removing net zero funding and supportive policies would lead to the loss of 730,000 direct jobs and a further 650,000 indirect jobs that would otherwise be created or sustained by low carbon industries on a net zero pathway.

The majority of direct job losses in the medium term would be in skilled trades and construction from failing to upgrade the UK’s poor quality building stock, and in the automotive industry from losing EV manufacturing (which in the medium term will be the majority of auto manufacturing) and battery manufacturing overseas, with the associated loss of supply chain jobs (braking systems, seating systems etc) in the UK. We model that in more mature sectors like onshore and offshore wind, a limited number of jobs would remain in maintaining existing assets, while new build out would cease. Nascent sectors which do not currently employ many people but are projected to grow significantly under a net zero pathway (such as floating offshore wind) would fail to materialise.

Table 2: Medium-term Job Destruction from Reform UK policies

	Direct jobs destroyed	Indirect jobs destroyed	Total job destruction
Retrofit and heat pump installation	250000	285700	535700
Automotive sector (incl. EV and battery manufacturing)	232000	82200	314200
Fixed offshore wind and onshore wind	85300	85300	170600
Utility scale solar	27800	13500	41300
Water, digital, grid and other infrastructure	21300	26100	47400
Local Authority led infrastructure	17000	21100	38100
Hydrogen	14500	32300	46800
Floating offshore wind	13200	18500	31700

³⁹ We define medium-term job losses as jobs which would exist in the mid-to-late 2030s in a net zero scenario, which would not exist if the UK’s net zero policy framework was dismantled. This includes a combination of jobs lost which currently exist and that would continue to exist under a net zero trajectory through to 2040, and the failure to materialise of future jobs which are expected to be created in the low carbon economy before 2040. Figures for short-term and medium-term jobs should not be added together into a total.

Net zero power grid build out	11100	18500	29600
CCUS	10000	5000	15000
Bus services	8000	4300	12300
Port upgrades	7600	9500	17100
Cycling and walking infrastructure	6700	13400	20100
Tree planting and peatland restoration	5800	2700	8500
EV charging infrastructure	5500	8200	13700
Industrial decarbonisation	5000	10000	15000
Bus manufacturing	4300	13000	17300
Small scale solar and battery installation	1000	1000	2000
Total	726,100	650,300	1,376,400
Potential losses from further cuts to reach £30bn public spending cuts			
Existing nuclear capacity maintained but not expanded	45000	22500	67500
Farming and countryside programme	74000		74000
Flood defences	3750	4500	8250

These figures do not include potential job losses in nuclear power, environmental land management (farming subsidies) and flood defences, which Reform UK has said they will protect (but which would likely be affected by efforts to achieve £30bn of government spending cuts).

Localised job destruction

We model the breakdown of short-term direct job losses for each nation of the UK according to data on the location of existing low carbon and green sector employment.⁴⁰ While Scotland represents 8% of the UK population, our modelling shows it would lose 13% of associated jobs, which is due largely to the prevalence of jobs in the wind sector.

Direct short-term jobs destroyed	UK total	England	Scotland	Wales	N.I.
	209,200	166,800	26,300	10,100	6,000

⁴⁰ Green Job Employment Figures by nation (ONS, 2023), Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) by nation (ONS, 2024)

While jobs in some sectors of the low carbon economy are spread evenly across the UK (for example, in building upgrades or public transport services), those associated with energy, manufacturing and infrastructure cluster in parts of the UK due to either geographic proximity to a development opportunity, or a strong industrial heritage and concentration of manufacturing capacity and engineering skills. Removing net zero funding and supportive policies would have an outsized impact on jobs and local prospects in these clusters, and we provide four case studies below.

The North East of England

Summary

The North East of England's net zero economy encompasses a diverse and expanding set of industries, with around 27,000 people employed in net zero businesses today and the number projected to rise sharply, associated with offshore wind and port expansion. The majority of these jobs would be risked by removing all government support for net zero initiatives and creating a hostile environment for renewable energy. Key industries, including EV manufacturing, battery production, offshore and onshore wind, and associated supply chains, could face closures or relocation overseas, leading to the loss of tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs. Investment in ports, engineering hubs, and innovation centres would decline, undermining local R&D, talent development, and industrial diversification. The region's position as a centre of engineering would weaken, with long-term economic growth, skills retention, and global competitiveness significantly reduced.

Automotive Industry

The automotive sector is a core industry for the North East, with Nissan employing over 6,000 people directly at its Sunderland plant⁴¹ where it manufactures the electric Nissan Leaf, electric Qashqai, and from 2026 the electric Juke.⁴² The recently expanded Sunderland-based AESC UK battery plant, operational since 2012 and developed to serve Nissan's growing demand, employs 1000 people.⁴³ Jatco has recently established a facility in Sunderland's advanced manufacturing park to provide electric vehicle powertrains to Nissan and others, employing over 180 people directly.⁴⁴

In total, it is estimated that the Nissan plant supports over 30 Tier 1 companies in the North East supply chain,⁴⁵ which will in turn support many smaller firms and a logistics sector serving just-

⁴¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nissan-launches-450m-next-generation-leaf-in-major-vote-of-confidence-in-uks-industrial-strategy>

⁴² <https://europe.nissannews.com/en-GB/releases/nissan-sunderland-plant-celebrates-launch-of-qashqai-equipped-with-new-epower>

⁴³ <https://www.aesc-group.com/news/aesc-launches-its-new-uk-battery-gigafactory>

⁴⁴ https://www.jatco.co.jp/english_release/2025/20250116_1744.html

⁴⁵ <https://investnortheastengland.co.uk/case-studies/nissan/>

in-time producers and shipping finished products. It is estimated that over 10,000 indirect jobs are supported by the automotive sector across the region.⁴⁶

The UK government has backed Nissan, AESC and others with subsidies, loans and other measures as part of its support for the EV sector.⁴⁷ However, UK production faces major challenges, with Nissan saying the Sunderland plant could close if the UK is excluded from Made in Europe rules,⁴⁸ and lower than expected demand for EVs damaging revenue. Given the precarious state of the sector at present, we assess that removing financial support for production and removing measures that drive UK domestic demand for EVs, would make the UK an uncompetitive location to base EV production and lead to relocation overseas.

Offshore wind

The offshore and onshore wind workforce demand in the North East is currently estimated at 6,000 workers.⁴⁹ Examples of key employers in the region include SeAH Wind in Middlesbrough, employing 350 people to manufacture monopiles (foundations),⁵⁰ Equinor's south Tyneside offshore wind operations and maintenance facility employing 400 people,⁵¹ Smulders in Wallsend employing 200 people to manufacture wind turbine foundations,⁵² Machine Dynamics in Newcastle, employing 220 people to producing remote operated vehicles and trenching machines to lay cables,⁵³ and the new JDR Subsea Cable Facility near Blyth will employ 440 people to produce high voltage cables once construction is complete.⁵⁴ Alongside large specialist employers are large engineering firms such as Siemens Energy in Tyneside, which employs over 1500 staff⁵⁵, and Newcastle-based WSP, Arup, Sweco and Aecom, all of which serve the offshore wind sector, and a proliferation of micro and small engineering firms with niche expertise, such as Tyneside based Kinewell Energy, Walker Subsea Engineering and Ventus Energy. Many large and small firms in the sector have a background and remain active in the region's heavy engineering and oil and gas sector, with offshore wind now representing a major revenue stream and opportunity for diversification as oil and gas production declines.

⁴⁶ <https://lichfields.uk/media/1721/fdi-ne.pdf>

⁴⁷ See e.g. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/another-boost-for-british-car-industry-as-1-billion-secured-for-new-sunderland-gigafactory>

⁴⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2026/mar/05/nissan-sunderland-plant-could-close-if-uk-excluded-from-made-in-europe-rules-eu>

⁴⁹ https://www.renewableuk.com/media/jvsdey0k/ruk-owic-offshore-wind-skills-report_2025.pdf

⁵⁰ <https://www.seahwind.com/>

⁵¹ <https://doggerbank.com/community-news/promoting-opportunities-in-green-growth-for-future-generations/>

⁵² From Companies House filings

⁵³ From Companies House filings

⁵⁴ <https://www.jdrcables.com/about-jdr/new-investment>

⁵⁵ From Companies House filings

Ports and net zero clusters

Focussing on one hub in the region – the Port of Blyth - illustrates the importance of the net zero economy locally. It is estimated that approximately 1,000 people are employed at Port of Blyth based businesses⁵⁶ with 2,700 jobs supported in the Blyth estuary and wider hinterland.⁵⁷ This includes core offshore wind employers such as Osbit, a renewables engineering consultant, the ORE Catapult innovation and testing centre, companies running offshore vessel mobilisation and demobilisation, and providers of specialist equipment and personnel such as Pharos Offshore Group. It also includes small companies providing training to offshore workers (the Wind Academy, the Energy Central Learning Hub), medium sized companies manufacturing key offshore wind components (JDR Cables, Enshore Subsea), and smaller engineering consultants (Engineering and Marine Services Ltd). Alongside these companies are a mix of renewable energy sector firms drawn to the cluster (for example Supernode Technology, developing new transmission grid technology).

Importantly, the Port of Blyth is not a unique example in the region. Hundreds of new jobs linked to renewable energy are currently being created at the Port of Tyne,⁵⁸ and it is estimated that a port upgrade to create new deep water quayside as part of the Tyne Clean Energy Park could create up to 12,000 new jobs.⁵⁹

The North East's status as a centre of engineering excellence, particularly subsea engineering, is reinforced by a cluster of higher education institutions that includes Teesside University's Net Zero Industry Innovation Centre, Durham University's Energy Institute, the Newcastle University convened Northern Net Zero Accelerator, and Teesside and Durham Universities' Hydrogen Innovation Project. As well as supporting the local economy through direct employment and attraction of outside investment, university-led net zero initiatives support local businesses by reducing R&D costs (particularly in cutting edge technologies that individual companies lack the resources to risk investment in), providing companies with access to testing facilities and labs, creating a local pool of talent and skills, and creating reputational benefits.

The West Midlands

Summary

If the UK government were to remove support for net zero initiatives and create a hostile environment for renewable energy, the West Midlands would be among the hardest hit regions in the country, with 74,000 direct jobs affected in the short and medium term. The area's economy is deeply intertwined with the transition to clean energy, from its world-class electric vehicle manufacturing base anchored by JLR, to its vast network of manufacturing and

⁵⁶ <https://www.business-live.co.uk/ports-logistics/port-blyth-benefits-early-start-29169551>

⁵⁷ <https://investnortheastengland.co.uk/blyth-energy-central/>

⁵⁸ <https://climatepost.co/boom-time-at-port-of-tyne-as-500-new-jobs-to-be-created-in-923m-renewable-energy-investment/>

⁵⁹ <https://www.portoftyne.co.uk/news-and-media/news/port-of-tyne-unveils-230-acre-green-development-terminal>

engineering firms supporting the renewables supply chain, and its role as the operational heart of HS2. Stripping away the policy frameworks and financial support that underpin these industries would not only threaten tens of thousands of skilled jobs, but risk permanently dismantling an industrial base that has taken decades to build.

Automotive Industry

The West Midlands has been at the core of UK car manufacturing from the production of Land Rovers starting in 1948 to the production of fully electric Range Rovers in Solihull today. JLR facilities in Solihull, Gaydon, Whitley and Wolverhampton directly employ 9,000,⁶⁰ 12,000⁶¹, 4,500 and 1,200 people respectively⁶², and JLR is frequently referred to as the “jewel in the crown” of UK manufacturing.⁶³ While their plants currently produce a combination of ICE, plug-in hybrid electric (PHEV) and battery electric vehicles (BEV), the company is investing £15 billion to transform all these locations into electric manufacturing facilities, so that by 2030 every model will be available as a BEV.⁶⁴ Other notable West Midland electric auto manufacturers include Aston Martin’s Gaydon facility,⁶⁵ and the London EV Company’s facility in Coventry.⁶⁶ Electrification is not just about maintaining the region’s manufacturers, but expanding this base, with plans for the West Midlands gigafactory and Green Power Park in Coventry to create 6,000 new skilled jobs in battery research, industrialisation, manufacturing, testing and recycling.⁶⁷

This production base supports a vast network of Tier 1 manufacturing suppliers (for example ZF Lemforder in Solihull which employs over 250 people⁶⁸, Denso Manufacturing in Telford which employs 750 people⁶⁹ or Colesehill based Sertec employing 935 people⁷⁰), engineering and design firms (for example Horiba Mira in Nuneaton or Ricardo’s technical centre in Leamington Spa), and SME niche suppliers. The region’s connection to advanced auto manufacturing is reinforced by numerous university-based centres of research and development, for example Coventry University’s Centre for Advanced Low Carbon Propulsion Systems, the University of Warwick’s Advanced Propulsion Centre, and Birmingham University’s Tyseley Energy Park/Energy Innovation Centre.

⁶⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8epp75z821o>

⁶¹ <https://www.jlr.com/uk-impact-report>

⁶² <https://www.jlr.com/uk-impact-report>

⁶³ See e.g. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-backs-jaguar-land-rover-with-15-billion-loan-guarantee>

⁶⁴ <https://www.jlr.com/news/2023/04/jlr-invest-ps15-billion-over-next-five-years-its-modern-luxury-electric-first-future>

⁶⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-coventry-warwickshire-56315124>

⁶⁶ <https://www.levc.com/>

⁶⁷ <https://greenpowerpark.co.uk/>

⁶⁸ https://www.zf.com/uk/media/company/downloads/ZF-Lemforder-UK-Ltd_Gender-Pay-Gap-Report-2020.pdf

⁶⁹ <https://www.investtelford.co.uk/news/2023/10/4/case-study-denso-delivering-added-values-a2559>

⁷⁰ <https://www.sertec.co.uk/gender-pay-gap/>

JLR has struggled in recent years. In 2024 and 2025 it suffered major losses from Trump's introduction of tariffs,⁷¹ experienced a five-week production shut down and circa £2 billion of losses due to a cyber hack in 2025,⁷² and will face further challenges if the UK is excluded from Made in Europe rules.⁷³ While Nigel Farage has commented that JLR "deserves to go bust"⁷⁴, the impact of JLR closing was illustrated by the 2025 shutdown, with suppliers across the West Midlands struggling with the financial impact of the stoppage.⁷⁵

Given the precarious state of the sector at present, and JLR's operations in particular, we assess that removing financial support for production, while removing measures that drive UK domestic demand for EVs, would make the UK an uncompetitive location to base JLR's EV production and lead to relocation overseas (e.g. to Slovakia, where JLR already has a manufacturing facility, and from which it would have full EU Single Market access).

Industrial base supplying the renewables sector

While the West Midlands is not a centre for Tier 1 offshore wind turbine manufacturing and assembly, it has a substantial concentration of companies in the renewables Tier 2 and Tier 3 supply chain, with a focus on precision engineering, power electronics, advanced materials, embedded computing systems and control software. In total, the supply chain to the renewables industry is estimated to employ 37,000 people in the region, developing products and services for the wind, solar and biomass sectors.⁷⁶

Major employers directly linked to renewables include GE Vernova, which has recently expanded its manufacturing facilities in Stafford, creating 600 new jobs to meet growing demand for high-voltage direct current (HVDC) systems,⁷⁷ and National Grid, which has a major site at the Warwick Technology Park. The region is also home to major hubs attracting clusters of smaller companies providing services and components to the renewables and low carbon sector, such as the Tyseley Energy Park in Birmingham. However, the bulk of the region's renewable employment is in dual use companies that are not renewable energy companies, but for whom the domestic renewables sector is a key source of demand. These include construction materials producer Tarmac which is headquartered in Solihul, and which is engaged in the wind sector from port infrastructure upgrades to foundation materials and onshore civils works⁷⁸, Wolverhampton-based motion control technology firm Moog which is

⁷¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/aug/08/jaguar-land-rover-profits-dented-tariffs-drop-sales>

⁷² <https://cybermonitoringcentre.com/2025/10/22/cyber-monitoring-centre-statement-on-the-jaguar-land-rovercyber-incident-october-2025/>

⁷³ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2026/mar/05/nissan-sunderland-plant-could-close-if-uk-excluded-from-made-in-europe-rules-eu>

⁷⁴ <https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/nigel-farage-told-hang-your-32698860>

⁷⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/sep/23/peter-kyle-jaguar-land-rover-shutdown-car-production-jlr-cyber-attack>

⁷⁶ <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2brgt3ge/hogir-prospectus.pdf>

⁷⁷ <https://www.gevernova.com/news/press-releases/ge-vernova-expands-facilities-stafford-uk-support-growing-demand-hvdc-technology>

⁷⁸ <https://www.tarmac.com/renewable-energy/>

engaged in wind turbine testing,⁷⁹ steel fabricator and construction company Hadley Group, which produces mountings for large scale solar farms,⁸⁰ and Sutton Coldfield-based metal component manufacturer Brookvale Manufacturing, which produces renewable energy components.⁸¹ While companies like these develop products for multiple sectors, the complete removal of new domestic renewables projects from their order books would be damaging and lead to job losses.

Scrapping HS2

Reform UK's policy of scrapping HS2, leaving unfinished infrastructure in place, would hit the West Midlands particularly hard, as it is the primary geographical and operational hub for HS2, with 12,500 workers based there, approximately one-third of the project's total national workforce of 34,000.⁸²

This significant concentration of personnel is driven by the region's role as the project's administrative and technical centre, hosting both the National Construction Headquarters in Birmingham and the integrated Network Control Centre and Maintenance Depot at Washwood Heath. The high density of labour-intensive "mega-projects" within the region, such as the Curzon Street and Solihull Interchange stations and the complex Delta Junction,⁸³ necessitates a local workforce which exceeds that of more linear sections of the route. Furthermore, this regional representation has been bolstered by targeted state interventions, including three dedicated HS2 Recruitment Hubs and specialised training programmes that have transitioned nearly 2,000 previously unemployed local residents into the project's supply chain and construction roles.⁸⁴

East Anglia

Summary

If the UK government were to remove support for net zero initiatives and create a hostile environment for renewable energy, East Anglia would face severe consequences, with over 25,000 direct jobs affected, mostly in the short term. The region's economy has become fundamentally tied to the clean energy transition, with the port towns of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft having successfully rebuilt their industrial identities around offshore wind following the decline of fishing and North Sea gas. Inland, Norwich has grown into a research and administrative hub for the sector, while a cluster of advanced manufacturers around Hethel are

⁷⁹ <https://www.moog.co.uk/markets.html>

⁸⁰ <https://www.hadleygroup.com/custom-roll-forming/solar-support-systems-renewable-energy-components/>

⁸¹ <https://brookvale-manufacturing.co.uk/industries/renewable-energy/>

⁸² <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/from-training-to-employment-more-west-midlanders-progress-into-jobs-on-hs2>

⁸³ <https://railway-news.com/hs2-achieves-peak-production-rate-across-2025/>

⁸⁴ <https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/new-government-backed-recruitment-hubs-will-help-more-unemployed-people-into-work-on-hs2/>

investing in an electric vehicle future. Removing the policy frameworks that underpin these industries would not only put thousands of jobs at risk across ports, supply chains and research centres, but would reverse what has been a remarkable economic revival for communities that have long experienced underinvestment.

Offshore wind

It is difficult to overstate the importance of offshore wind for the port towns of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, which historically supported fishing industries and the Southern North Sea gas extraction, but with the decline of those sectors have experienced underinvestment. As the UK's most Easterly port, the Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility (LEEF) serves as a major operations and maintenance (O&M) and construction hub for several offshore wind farms in the Southern North Sea, including East Anglia One and Greater Gabbard. Major employers include Scottish Power, with two sites at Trinity Road and Hamilton Road employing 100 people each,⁸⁵ and the Orbis Energy Hub, which hosts SSE Offshore Wind, Ore Catapult, ASCO, Wood and others, collectively employing hundreds more. Other significant employers include James Fisher Marine Services (rebranded as James Fisher Renewables as the company has diversified and shifted from oil and gas to offshore wind)⁸⁶ which employs 50 people directly,⁸⁷ Turner LNCI (a Crew Transfer Vessel) employing 70 people directly,⁸⁸ offshore wind training providers (e.g. East Coast Energy Training Academy and Maersk Training), steel fabricators that supply offshore wind alongside other sectors (e.g. S&G Steel Fabrication) and smaller engineering firms focussed on wind (e.g. RMI Engineering). Recent investment in LEEF is expected to create an additional 500 jobs.⁸⁹

Less than 10 miles up the coast, Great Yarmouth port is now a construction, assembly, and staging hub for offshore wind, and has been chosen as an Operations & Maintenance base for the Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone⁹⁰ and Dudgeon Wind Farm.⁹¹ A National Wealth Fund supported project to refurbish the quay into an expanded O&M centre is expected to create an additional 650 jobs.⁹² Major employers in the offshore wind sector include Vattenfall, in the process of recruiting 130 staff locally,⁹³ Equinor, which runs an O&M hub employing 70 people⁹⁴, and ASCO, a logistics, materials, and operations management specialist with a

⁸⁵ <https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/w/scottishpower-confirms-lowestoft-as-long-term-home-for-uk-offshore-wind-with-multi-million-investment> and <https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/23676197.scottishpower-renewables-creating-lasting-legacy-suffolk/>

⁸⁶ <https://www.james-fisher.com/divisions/energy/>

⁸⁷ From Companies House filings

⁸⁸ From Companies House filings

⁸⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cly58nnld6lo>

⁹⁰ <https://group.vattenfall.com/uk/newsroom/pressreleases/2023/vattenfall--great-yarmouth-port>

⁹¹ <https://dudgeonoffshorewind.co.uk/operations/greatyarmouth>

⁹² <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/73359/NWF-supports-delivery-of-Great-Yarmouth-offshore-wind-hub-through-Norfolk-County-Council-loan>

⁹³ <https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/article/10933/Major-piling-works-begin-for-new-operations-campus-in-Great-Yarmouth>

⁹⁴ <https://dudgeonoffshorewind.co.uk/operations/greatyarmouth>

background in oil and gas but for whom offshore wind is increasingly important⁹⁵ and who employ 120 people locally and support a further 120 jobs.⁹⁶ Further examples of local companies diversifying from oil and gas into offshore wind include precision engineering and fabrication firm Moughton Engineering, who employ 73 people locally⁹⁷ and Proserv, which designs, manufactures, tests and services subsea control systems from their Great Yarmouth base.⁹⁸ ThreeSixty Energy, which is primarily an oil and gas company, also services the offshore wind sector from its Great Yarmouth base.⁹⁹ A significant feature of the green economy in Great Yarmouth is the large number of micro and small firms providing engineering services (e.g. the Eng Cad Group and DS Energy) asset management services (e.g. N-Ergise, Stowen Group, Partnership for Renewables) and equipment and logistics services (e.g. OEG and Centurion) into both offshore wind and oil and gas projects.

The benefits of offshore wind extend inland to Norwich, which is a research and administrative hub. Vessel firm Cadeler, subsea engineering and services firm Acteon Group, and Seabed data firm Sulmara, all have large presence in the city, collectively employing hundreds of workers,¹⁰⁰ alongside smaller consultancies and engineering firms employing staff in the tens (e.g. TGS4c and Barrington Energy). While not strictly an offshore energy company, energy market intelligence group Cornwall Insight employ close to 100 staff in Norwich, and are part of Norwich's net zero knowledge economy, which includes the University of East Anglia's Tyndall Centre and a wide array of micro and small environmental consultants (e.g. Harrison Group Environmental, Greenlight Environmental Consultancy and Green Energy Consultancy).

In total, it is estimated that the offshore wind sector employs 13,600 people in the wider East of England area¹⁰¹ the majority of which will be East Anglia based. This figure could rise substantially on the offshore wind sector's current trajectory. It is estimated that the creation of a Green Energy Hub at Harwich could create an additional 5,000 jobs in the sector.¹⁰²

Automotive and advanced engineering

While not an automotive hub on the scale of the West Midlands, East Anglia does support a network of firms linked to high spec engineering and electrification. The Lotus factory at Hethel, southwest of Norwich, manufactures the Lotus Evija electric car, and has EV development workshops and battery validation labs,¹⁰³ with electrification "at the core" of the redevelopment

⁹⁵ <https://ascoworld.com/about>

⁹⁶ <https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/TR010043-000709-Burness%20Paull%20on%20behalf%20of%20ASCO%20UK%20Limited.pdf>

⁹⁷ From Companies House filings

⁹⁸ <https://proserv.com/locations/great-yarmouth/>

⁹⁹ <https://three60energy.com/sectors/renewables/>

¹⁰⁰ From Companies House filings

¹⁰¹ https://www.renewableuk.com/media/jvsdey0k/ruk-owic-offshore-wind-skills-report_2025.pdf

¹⁰² https://freeporteast.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Freeport_East_FBC_June_2023.pdf

¹⁰³ <https://kahnmedia.com/lotus-engineering-to-launch-new-battery-test-facilities-to-support-booming-electric-vehicle-ev-sector/>

of the site.¹⁰⁴ The nearby Hethel Engineering Centre, established with support from government and Lotus itself,¹⁰⁵ is closely linked to the Lotus factory ecosystem, hosting start-ups that develop new technologies and train skilled engineers. Equipmake by Snetterton, manufactures electric motors, inverters, power electronics and complete EV drivetrains. Based in Wymondham, just a few miles from Hethel, Multimatic is part of the same regional cluster of advanced manufacturing, developing advanced carbon fibre structures and lightweight chassis systems.¹⁰⁶ While not explicitly an EV company, their specialism in lightweight, high-performance materials are particularly relevant for weight reduction and structural optimisation required for EV production.¹⁰⁷ In total, we estimate that 3000 local jobs rely on the sector.

However, the sector has recently faced troubles, with the impact of US tariffs leading Lotus to “actively explore” overseas options, and cutting more than a third of its UK workforce at Hethel.¹⁰⁸ While Lotus does not serve a mass market, we assess that the introduction of a policy environment hostile to EVs (removing financial support for production, while removing measures that drive UK domestic demand for EVs) would further threaten the presence of Lotus UK, and undermine the region’s other manufacturers.

Inverness and the North East Highlands

Summary

If the UK government were to remove support for net zero initiatives and create a hostile environment for renewable energy, Inverness and the North East Highlands would face contraction in the short term (green industries currently support over 3000 direct jobs) and the removal of industries core to the region’s future (forthcoming development is expected to create over 10,000 new jobs). Over the past decade, the region has successfully reinvented itself around the clean energy transition, with offshore wind, tidal stream, wave energy, and low-carbon heating attracting investment, creating jobs, and giving traditional oil and gas firms a viable diversification pathway. The area's ports, engineering firms, and research centres have become integral parts of the UK's renewable energy infrastructure, and the planned Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport promises to deepen that role significantly.

Large scale renewable energy generation and port services

Inverness and the North East Highlands have, over the past decade, positioned themselves at the forefront of the UK’s transition to a low-carbon economy, with renewable energy acting as a key driver of investment, employment, and industrial diversification. The growth of offshore wind, wave energy, and low-carbon heating has not only created new jobs, but also enabled

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.evo.co.uk/lotus/204149/lotus-looks-to-the-future-hethels-plans-unwrapped>

¹⁰⁵ <https://hethelinnovation.com/who-are-hethel/the-past-present-and-future-of-hethel/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://cft.multimatic.com/>

¹⁰⁷ See e.g. https://newsroom.porsche.com/en_US/2021/motorsport/porsche-multimatic-collaboration-lmdh-chassis-manufacturer-24536.html

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp9851z07v2o>

many traditional oil and gas firms to adapt and remain competitive in a changing energy landscape. Against this backdrop, proposals to ban new renewable energy developments, as set out in Reform UK policy, would represent a significant economic shock to the region.

The large-scale renewables sector is already at the heart of the region's economy, with micro, small and medium-sized employers clustered in and around Inverness. These serve the offshore wind sector, for which regional ports are already important hubs for marshalling and assembly (Port of Cromarty Firth), construction and fabrication (Port of Nigg), and logistics/servicing (Port of Inverness), supporting thousands of jobs in the area.¹⁰⁹

Larger employers include construction and engineering company BAM, whose Inverness office employs 200 people on engineering and energy projects¹¹⁰, crane hire firm Weldex for whom a major sector is wind and which employs circa 100 staff¹¹¹, Sumitomo Electric Industries, whose new subsea cable factory close to the Port of Nigg will create 156 manufacturing jobs on-site,¹¹² and the Global Energy Group, which is headquartered in Inverness and is developing a new 2000m2 head office in the area off the back of major expansion plans.¹¹³

Servicing and managing renewable assets supports multiple smaller companies in Inverness, such as Aurora Energy Services (which has also recently opened a training centre for offshore renewables workers in Inverness¹¹⁴), Birlinn Tech and Enneco. The development of wave power supports a number of small engineering specialists and R&D firms in Inverness, including AWS Ocean Energy, Wave Energy Scotland and 4c Engineering. Tidal stream developers MeyGen Tidal Energy Project¹¹⁵ and Orbital Marine Power¹¹⁶ have situated manufacturing, assembly and maintenance at the Nigg Energy Park. Engineering consultancies linked to renewable energy are also well represented in Inverness, from large international firms with local hubs such as Aecom, to local specialists including Arthian and the Enviro Centre. While these are smaller employers with staff footprints in the tens, the cumulative impact is already significant relative to the size of the local economy.

Importantly, many of the firms for whom the offshore wind sector is now a key customer, have a background in oil and gas and continue to serve both sectors. Eliminating new renewable energy projects, by shrinking the region's engineering workforce and reducing investment in infrastructure, would reduce the capacity of local firms to operate across the whole energy

¹⁰⁹ See e.g. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-unlocks-floating-offshore-wind-with-major-investment-for-scottish-port>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/about-us/our-supply-chain/bam/>

¹¹¹ From Companies House filings

¹¹² <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/about-us/our-supply-chain/sumitomo/>

¹¹³ <https://projectscot.com/2025/10/global-energy-group-rebrands-and-unveils-plans-for-multi-million-pound-hq/>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.hie.co.uk/news-and-blogs/news/2025/june/10/renewable-energy-training-centre-officially-opened-in-inverness/>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.lowcarboncontracts.uk/news/the-meygen-tidal-stream-project-pioneering-sustainable-energy-generation-from-the-ocean/>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.orbitalmarine.com/orbital-and-global-energy-group-agreement/>

sector, and undermine long term efforts companies have made to diversify from the declining fossil fuels sector into renewables.

Given the UK's current plans to dramatically expand fixed and floating offshore wind, a sudden change in government policy would not only lead to job losses now, but also eliminate future prospects for the region which are centred around this growth industry. It is forecast that the planned Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (ICFGF) project will create 11,300 direct and indirect jobs in the Highlands.¹¹⁷ This project will aim to create the largest green engineering development area in the UK, covering 6 sites,¹¹⁸ with ambitions to serve the European-wide offshore wind sector.¹¹⁹ With new offshore development on the UK Continental Shelf to be halted under Reform's policy proposals, this would also cost local jobs that would otherwise emerge to serve overseas markets, as the entire development would be highly unlikely to proceed.

Small scale renewable energy

Alongside the rollout of large-scale renewables, Inverness, as the capital of the Scottish Highlands, is also a commercial hub for the installation of domestic and smaller scale low carbon heating and renewable systems. RI Cruden, a long-established mechanical, electrical, and renewable energy company, employs 55 people¹²⁰ in Inverness installing ground and air source heat pumps, solar PV, battery storage systems and EV chargers for smaller commercial and domestic customers.¹²¹ The McInnes Group in Inverness and AES Renewables in nearby Dingwall, also employ tens of staff to install renewable heating solutions to commercial and domestic customers.¹²² In addition to the private sector, Community Energy Scotland supports communities with expert advice to develop and manage renewable energy projects, as well as employing 15 staff directly in Inverness where it is based.¹²³ While rooftop solar would likely remain a viable sector under Reform's policy mix,¹²⁴ low-carbon heating and community energy would likely shrink significantly, given the technology's current reliance on a supportive policy framework and subsidies to bring costs down. This would trigger job losses throughout this burgeoning sector in the local economy.

¹¹⁷

https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/83432/item_3_inverness_and_cromarty_firth_green_freeport_%E2%80%93_full_business_case_update_fbc

¹¹⁸ Port of Cromarty Firth, Port of Nigg, Port of Inverness, Highland Deephaven, Ardersier Energy Transition Facility and Inverness Campus

¹¹⁹ <https://greenfreeport.scot/>

¹²⁰ From Companies House filings

¹²¹ <https://ricruden.net/>

¹²² From Companies House filings

¹²³ From Annual Report

¹²⁴ It would remain attractive for households and businesses with capital to invest, given savings relative to high grid electricity costs

Methodology and sources

We take published policy documents and public statements as evidence of Reform UK policy. We then model the degree to which policy choices would lead to contraction in each sector of the low carbon economy, based on a combination of historical data (e.g. how industries have responded to the provision and withdrawal of government funding), public statements by large employers and industry bodies, and our own assumptions about the reliance of specific sectors on government support, and the reliance of supply chain companies on those sectors.

For existing UK-wide jobs figures, we use the latest data published by ONS on the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE). Where LCREE data is not available for specific sectors, we rely on a combination of sources, including industry reports and our own modelling based on existing spend and ONS full-time equivalent multipliers and effects for direct and indirect jobs. We then apply contraction effects in specific sectors to existing jobs numbers in those sectors to model the number of existing jobs at risk in the short term (within 1-3 years of policy rollbacks).

For UK jobs risked in the medium-term in sectors anticipated to grow over the next decades (e.g. EV manufacturing, floating offshore wind, retrofit), we rely on industry reports and scenario planning. For sectors that we would expect to remain at 2026 levels on a net zero trajectory out to 2040 (e.g. jobs from port expansion, jobs from bus services) we use the same numbers as for existing jobs at risk.

We break down losses within the UK nations according to a weighted average derived from LCREE and ONS Green Jobs location data. Our four case studies are based on bottom-up, desk-based research on the local low carbon economy. Headline figures for total jobs are based on regional reports, where available, regional breakdowns for key sectors provided by industry groups, or specific publications on major employers such as JLR in the West Midlands or Nissan in the North East of England. For smaller employers, we rely largely on Companies House filings to determine the number of direct employees potentially affected. Due to lack of regional data on supply chain locations, we do not present subregional modelling on indirect jobs affected, but present examples of indirect jobs supported by key sectors where available from existing sources.

This analysis was commissioned from Transition Economics by Oil Change UK and Friends of the Earth Scotland

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Job Destruction Charts

Figure 1: Short-term Direct & Indirect Job Destruction from Reform UK policies

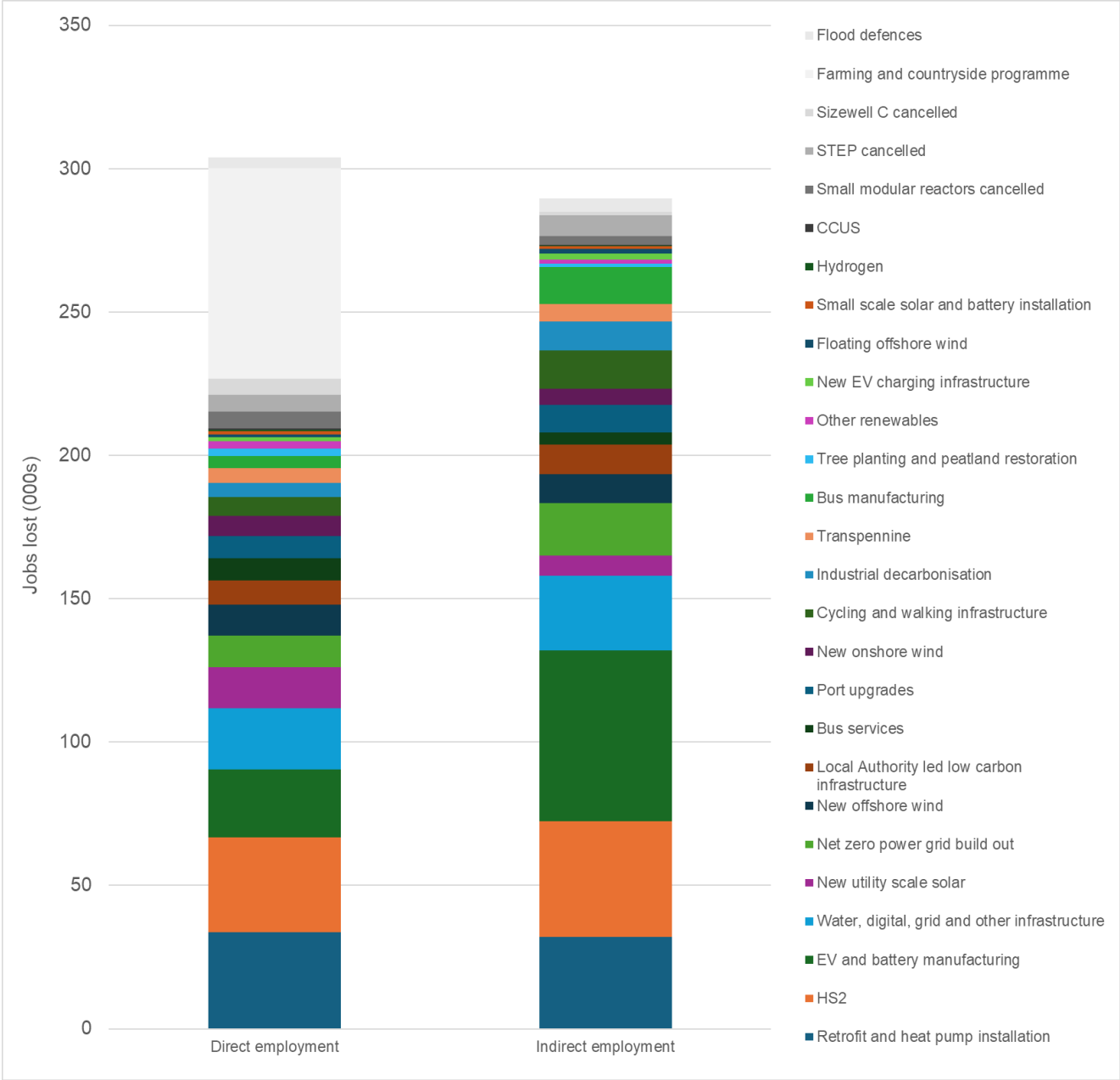


Figure 2: Medium-term Job Destruction from Reform UK policies

