

Finance Officers and Associated Competencies (Skills, Knowledge & Experience)

Date 01/12/2025



Project Stage	Stage 0: Strategic Definition	Stage 1: Preparation and Briefing		Stage 2: Concept Design		Stage 3: Spatial Coordination and Localization	Stage 4: Technical Design		Stage 5: Construction, Integration and Installation	Stage 6: Handover	Stage 7: Operation, Performance & Lifecycle Management	
Finance Stage Gate			1 Propose commercial model		2 Investor commitment			3 Investment				4 Completion
Finance support			Commercial models Financial Viability Assessment		Finance advice Investor requirements	Underwriting	Underwriting Additional Finance Support					Operation and impact evaluation Ongoing Financial Stewardship Lifecycle Planning and End-of-Life Assessment
Project support	Baselining Project origination	Business case development		Technical Tools and standards		Technical Stakeholder engagement	Technical Critical friend				Evaluation Case study	

		Stakeholder engagement & senior support		Signposting								
--	--	---	--	-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Disclaimer:

While Greater South East Net Zero Hub has made every attempt to ensure that the information used is accurate, we are not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of this information. All information is provided as is, with no guarantee of completeness, accuracy, or timeliness. Assumptions used in the calculations are for indicative purposes and based on a range of sources including information supplied by partners, industry research and published government data. We are not liable for any errors in calculations or omissions resulting from data provided by the customer or third parties. This report does not constitute investment advice.

This report is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute financial, investment, or legal advice. The information, analysis, and assumptions presented are indicative only and should not be relied upon for making investment or business decisions. Readers should obtain independent professional advice before acting on any information contained in this report. The Hub accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising from reliance on the content of this report.

Context

Focus areas/service offerings: solar, wind, battery and smart energy systems (power generation and storage)

Pillars of Competency (Definitions)

- Skills: Practical, demonstrable abilities that can be applied to tasks or problems
- Knowledge: Theoretical and contextual understanding that informs judgment and decision-making
- Experience: Proven application of skills and knowledge in real-world contexts

Branding and Product Clarity Framework

- Product Type: Professional Role Description - Senior Finance and Investment Officer
- Description: Defines the strategic, commercial, and technical finance responsibilities across renewable and storage projects, aligning financial assurance with project delivery architecture
- Purpose: To clarify the dual integrator role of the Senior Finance and Investment Officer, bridging financial structuring and project design to ensure investment-grade outcomes in clean energy delivery
- Scope: Covers responsibilities, competencies, and activities of the role across RIBA project stages, including financial assurance, underwriting, investment appraisal, and evaluation
- Intended Audience: Government project sponsors, finance directors, technical leads, and delivery partners involved in energy transition programmes
- Application: Used as a reference framework for role definition, recruitment, capability mapping, and integration of finance functions within renewable energy projects
- Expected Outcome: A consistent understanding of the role, enabling coherent finance-project alignment, improved investment readiness, and value-for-money assurance across all project stages

RIBA Stages Support Description for a Senior Finance and Investment Officer:

Stage 0 - Strategic Definition

Project Support

Baselining

- Review existing financial approaches used for energy generation and storage projects, identifying strengths, limits, and areas for development.
- Establish a clear baseline including asset condition, operating costs, procurement maturity, and current organisational capability.
- Gather relevant data on energy use, emissions, and system performance to build a realistic picture of current state.
- Benchmark against comparable projects or authorities to help establish ambition, scale, and direction of travel.

Project Origination

- Develop early investment ideas that reflect local priorities across solar, wind, battery storage, and smart energy systems.
- Shape initial CAPEX/OPEX expectations, whole-life cost implications, and delivery timeframes.
- Work with internal teams to explore different ownership and delivery structures and their financial impact.
- Help ensure emerging proposals reflect principles of long-term value, affordability, and deliverability.
- Align project financial constraints with sponsor long-term goals, ensuring the early direction supports value creation and sustainable growth.

Competencies

Skills: Strategic thinking; early-stage financial analysis; budgeting; baselining; investment framing; scenario assessment; high-level cost modelling; analytical capability; stakeholder communication; decision-making; financial modelling (ROI/NPV/IRR) and cost-benefit analysis.

Knowledge: Energy project fundamentals; system economics & lifecycle costing (value engineering); risk assessment; financial modelling principles (ROI, NPV, IRR); feasibility analysis; capital structures; funding sources; regulatory and compliance considerations; market and technology awareness.

Experience: Supporting early project pipelines; feasibility work; organisational decarbonisation planning; experience with sustainability-linked investment analysis and ESG-aligned project development.

Stage 1 - Preparation and Briefing

Finance Support

Commercial Models

- Assess a range of delivery and commercial approaches and how they affect cost, control, risk, and complexity.
- Provide financial insight into ownership models, partnerships, and service contracts.
- Support the authority in selecting preferred options for further development.
- Clarify implications for CAPEX, OPEX, operational roles, and long-term cost exposure.

Financial Viability Assessment

- Conduct early-stage financial viability assessments for projects or initiatives.
- Support affordability analysis, revenue potential, long-term financial sustainability, and payback considerations.
- Assess potential returns on investment to inform internal decision-making and prioritisation.

Project Support

Business Case Development

- Shape the financial structure of early business case materials, including cost ranges, savings, and anticipated benefits.
- Ensure assumptions remain consistent with available evidence and realistic market conditions.
- Help articulate why the project is financially sound and strategically aligned.

Stakeholder Engagement & Senior Support

- Translate financial considerations into decision-friendly language for senior leaders and elected members.
- Help explain financial risks and trade-offs affecting the project's early direction.
- Provide finance input into engagement with internal departments and external partners.

Competencies

Skills: Commercial framing; financial viability assessment; business case structuring; affordability analysis; revenue assessment; financial communication; stakeholder engagement; financial modelling (NPV/ROI/IRR); cost-benefit evaluation.

Knowledge: Public-sector budgeting norms; strategic investment processes; cost comparison logic; commercial delivery models; financial performance metrics; risk-return profiles; funding mechanisms; relevant regulatory and compliance factors.

Experience: Supporting business case approvals; conducting viability assessments; shaping programme priorities; aligning financial and strategic considerations; early-stage option appraisal.

Stage 2 - Concept Design

Finance Support

Finance Advice

- Provide clear financial guidance that helps shape concept design options, including capital drivers, operating models, and cost categories.
- Help interpret technical decisions (capacity, technology, design choices) in financial terms.
- Ensure key cost drivers are visible, understood, and factored into design decisions.
- Support financial evaluation of initial feasibility studies including resource potential, site constraints, and technology suitability.

Investor Requirements

- Identify what financial and non-financial information external partners typically require at concept stage.
- Support the creation of early materials suitable for partnership or investment discussions.

- Integrate investor goals and return expectations into the financial and strategic sections of early business case materials.
- Ensure the Outline Business Case meets Green Book expectations for financial rigour, including risk assessment and investment justification.

Project Support

Technical

- Work with technical teams to ensure cost, benefit, and performance assumptions are realistic and evidence based.
- Translate resource constraints, land availability, grid capacity, and system sizing into financial implications.

Tools and Standards

- Help the team apply structured tools, templates, and data sources to build a robust concept package.
- Encourage the use of comparable project data, benchmarks, and cost evidence.

Signposting

- Direct teams to case studies, cost benchmarks, industry norms, and technical references.
- Identify where external expertise or data is required and support access to it.

Competencies

Skills: Financial–technical integration; feasibility analysis; interpreting resource, site, and grid studies; concept appraisal; risk interpretation; financial modelling; ROI/NPV/IRR assessment; Outline Business Case financial rigour; investor-alignment analysis.

Knowledge: Concept-stage cost drivers; feasibility and evaluation methods; investor requirements; lifecycle costing; Green Book–aligned assessment; market-based cost influences; design-linked financial risks; technology and site constraints.

Experience: Supporting multidisciplinary design teams; evaluating feasibility studies; preparing concept-level financial documentation; investor or partner engagement; early business case contribution.

Stage 3 - Spatial Coordination and Localisation

Finance Support

Underwriting (Preliminary)

- Reassess project costs and assumptions as design becomes linked to real-world constraints.
- Confirm affordability and value are maintained as site-specific factors emerge
- Support financial and project risk mitigation before committing to full development costs.
- Provide financial assurance before detailed design proceeds.

Project Support

Technical

- Evaluate how land constraints, grid access, planning conditions, and environmental requirements affect total project cost.
- Support adjustment of financial assumptions to reflect the realities of delivery and operation in place.
- Ensure alignment with planning policy, building regulations, and the specific characteristics of the area, translating these requirements into financial impacts.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Support discussions with partners, landowners, communities, and grid bodies by providing clear financial context.
- Explain financial impacts of local decisions, design change, or site limitations.

Competencies

Skills: Mid-stage financial verification; cost–risk reflection; scenario testing; financial impact analysis; stakeholder clarity; risk mitigation planning; spatial and planning-driven cost adjustment.

Knowledge: Localised risk factors; land and grid economics; planning and regulatory influences; cost escalation patterns; site-specific constraint impacts; mid-stage readiness assessment.

Experience: Assurance during iterative design; mitigating financial and project risks; translating spatial constraints into financial terms; preparing pre-detailed-design financial checks.

Stage 4 - Technical Design

Finance Support

Underwriting (Final)

- Conduct final review of costs, contingencies, operational assumptions, and risk provisions.
- Confirm the project is financially ready to proceed to procurement or delivery.
- Populate financial and techno-economic sections of the Full Business Case in line with Green Book discipline.
- Support robust investment case formation through accurate, defensible modelling.

Additional Finance Support

- Develop financial models demonstrating long-term performance, including CAPEX, OPEX, ROI, and lifecycle impacts.
- Conduct structured risk assessments and mitigation planning.
- Support de-risking mechanisms such as negotiating and validating offtake or PPA arrangements that support bankability.

Project Support

Technical

- Validate that final designs continue to reflect the project's financial expectations and performance assumptions.
- Ensure detailed technical choices do not create hidden long-term cost pressures.

Critical Friend

- Offer constructive challenge to ensure financial discipline is maintained during final technical decisions.
- Support project leads in balancing scope, risk, cost, and performance before commitment.

Competencies

Skills: Detailed financial assurance; advanced financial modelling (CAPEX/OPEX/ROI/IRR); risk quantification; investment readiness; Full Business Case financial population; techno-economic analysis; PPA/offtake risk mitigation; constructive challenge.

Knowledge: Lifecycle cost structures; commercial risk frameworks; FBC financial standards; bankability considerations; revenue and cost-certainty drivers; long-term risk allocation.

Experience: Final finance sign-off; preparing Full Business Case financials; negotiating de-risking mechanisms; aligning design and finance; supporting investment approval.

Stage 7 - Operation, Performance & Lifecycle Management

Finance Support

Operation and Impact Evaluation

- Monitor ongoing financial performance including operational costs, revenue flows, and maintenance expenditure.
- Ensure compliance with financial covenants, tax requirements, insurance obligations, and audit expectations.
- Track real-world financial outcomes against forecast assumptions and investment expectations.
- Identify variances, cost pressures, and optimisation opportunities to support long-term financial sustainability.

Ongoing Financial Stewardship

- Oversee cash flow management, debt servicing, and delivery of financial reporting to internal and external stakeholders.
- Maintain financial transparency and compliance with regulatory and funding conditions.
- Support ongoing decision-making for performance improvements, contractual adjustments, or operational changes.

Lifecycle Planning and End-of-Life Assessment

- Assess long-term performance and cost trajectories for solar, wind, and storage assets.
- Evaluate options for repowering, reinvestment, retirement, or decommissioning using updated financial modelling.

- Evaluate full end-of-life viability, including asset retirement obligations, recycling costs, replacement CAPEX, and alternative investment pathways.
- Develop or support plans that secure funding for end-of-life actions and ensure transparent cost management.

Project Support

Evaluation

- Gather and interpret operational data to assess whether the project has delivered expected value, cost performance, and carbon outcomes.
- Contribute financial evidence to formal project review processes and post-completion reporting.
- Support the identification of lessons learned, focusing on cost realism, operational efficiency, and financial resilience.

Case Study

- Assist in documenting financial and commercial lessons to inform future energy and storage projects.
- Contribute to internal knowledge capture, sector knowledge-sharing, and continuous improvement cycles.
- Help ensure that case study outputs reflect a balanced financial, technical, and operational perspective.

Competencies

Skills: Operational financial oversight/Financial analysis; budgeting; revenue monitoring; cashflow management; debt servicing; financial covenant compliance; audit coordination; asset capitalisation; lifecycle cost analysis; benefit realisation; regulatory compliance.

Knowledge: Public-sector budgeting and fund accounting; procurement and payment procedures; financial reporting and grant/loan compliance; audit requirements; operational performance economics; reinvestment and decommissioning cost drivers; transparency standards.

Experience: Managing operational finance; conducting performance reviews; coordinating audits; transitioning assets from project to operations; lifecycle planning; end-of-life financial assessment (repowering vs retirement).

Version	Date	Purpose / Change	Produced by	Approved by	Date
0.1	01-DEC-25	Draft	Nicholas Sia Han Ming	Justin Olosunde	01-DEC-25
1.0	02-DEC-25	Version 1.0	Gina Gobetti	Alexandra Snelling-Day	02-DEC-25