

CNSRP Update July 30th 2019

Project area	Status	Update
<u>Offshore Wind</u> Project – BOWL Project Moray East/West Future	Operational Planning Pre-planning	<p>The Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm completed its offshore construction during May and the Thomas Telford Building refurbishment at the Harbour has been handed over and will be officially opened on Monday 29th July 2019. A final milestone in bringing this £2.5Billion Project into full operation.</p> <p>Wick Harbour continues to pursue opportunities to attract vessels and activities in support of the survey and development phase of the next major Offshore wind farm development Moray East and West; This would work in conjunction with the activities at Fraserburgh, the nominated O&M Port for Moray East when completed. Moray West is at very early stage planning and so has yet to identify a O&M approach.</p> <p>Crown estates Scotland in conjunction with Marine Scotland are looking towards Round 4 of seabed leases for the next opportunities for developers to propose new offshore wind generation facilities. Applications for these are expected in the Third Quarter of 2019. It is expected that some of these opportunities will require floating rather than seabed solutions.</p>
<u>Tidal Power</u> Project – Simec Atlantis Tidal stream		<p>The company continues to develop its ideas and approach to allow the scale-up of the initial facility. This continues against a challenging background of Contracts for Difference which are more geared to existing technologies.</p>
<u>Space</u> Project - Space Hub Sutherland	Pre Planning	<p>The team announced that preparatory work is getting under way to agree the scope of environmental impact studies that should be carried out in relation to the site of a proposed space centre in Sutherland. Understanding the environmental impacts of satellite launches, as well as the economic benefits, will be crucial factors in determining the outcome of a future planning application to the Highland Council for design and construction of</p>

		<p>the space hub.</p> <p>That application is currently being prepared by HIE and will be accompanied by an extensive round of public consultation so that local people have opportunities to view the plans and put questions to the developer.</p>
Nuclear/Business Services	Scoping	Initial ideas for an Engineering Hub have been proposed by The Cavendish Dounreay partnership. These ideas are being examined for robustness of commercial case and to ensure there is no impact on the decommissioning programme at Dounreay.
Tourism	Strategy refresh.	See enabling activity below.
Project – North Coast 500	Operational	A study is being undertaken with North Highland Initiative funded jointly by HIE to examine the development of visitor numbers, trends and impacts. This revised baseline will be used as part of the information to develop a refreshed CNSRP Strategy towards Tourism activities. HIE has approved grant funding to support this.
Oil & Gas		HIE Board approved £3.0 Million of grant funding to support the redevelopment of the St Ola Pier at the HIE July Board meeting. This brings the total CNSRP partners' total contribution to £8.5 Million, with the NDA having previously approved £5.5 Million. This completes the funding required for Scrabster Harbour allowing the redevelopment of the St Ola pier to which is expected to complete by mid-2020.
Enabling activities – Key projects/Themes		
CNSRP Priority Projects review	Review	A revised process to identify, evaluate and adopt projects into the CNSRP Plan has been produced and will be operational shortly. This will facilitate the addition of further pipeline projects to the programme
Skills Investment Plan	Planning	The key findings of the Skills Investment Review undertaken via the Caithness Chamber of Commerce and Skills Development Scotland are being reviewed and an action plan agreed.
Apprenticeship development	Exploration	Initial discussions have been held with various stakeholders to explore a

		potential shared apprenticeship approach. This has been to be discussed at CNSRP Delivery group and it was agreed to explore the idea further.
<u>Air travel</u> Project Wick Airport Public Service offering	Submission of request	A report has been commissioned to look at options, opportunities and costs Consultation events have been held with a range of Stakeholders to discuss an approach to Scottish Government, led by the Caithness Chamber of Commerce and supported by CNSRP Partners, to seek a Public Service Obligation for Wick John O’Groats Airport. If granted this would provide a regular, subsidised timetable of flights to Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The aim would be to have flight times that meant that a meaningful day’s business could be carried out at each destination and that a wider range of ongoing conventions could be reliably met. An initial submission of the report was made to the Transport 2050 consultation and to Transport Scotland. Further lobbying and discussions are expected to continue to progress this.
<u>Road Travel</u> Project – Berridale Braes re-alignment	Construction	The long awaited re-alignment of Berridale Braes has commenced with the £9.6 Million project expected to complete in early 2020.
<u>Rail travel</u> Georgemas junction	Trials	A commercial train freight trial is to be completed using facilities at Georgemas junction. Plans are already being made for a trial week commencing 19 August. If successful this has the opportunity to offer an alternative route for freight to and from the region.
Caithness Sleeper train	Exploration	A proposal continues to be developed to offer an overnight sleeper service from the central belt to Thurso. Hi Trans have identified rolling stock and a potential timetabling approach and several operators have expressed interest in operating the service. Discussions continue.
<u>Digital Connectivity</u>		A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

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