



DOUNREAY SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

current as of 14 July 2026

Economic Impact Study

NRS Dounreay has been engaged through an NDA Group wide contract to develop the latest Economic Impact Study quantifying the economic impact of sites and the NDA group. The previous report was completed in 2022 and is updated on a three-year basis. The report was published on the 27th of May 2026, with an advance copy shared with the Chair and Vice Chair, and the Business Group briefed on the 16th of June. Highlights of the report include:

- The UK nuclear decommissioning supports £4.1bn of GVA and 56,000 jobs, around 0.2% of the total UK economy
- Dounreay contributes an annual £179 million of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Caithness and north Sutherland economy (around 20% of the areas GVA)
- The site supports around 2,600 jobs in Caithness and north Sutherland (around 23% of all jobs in the area)
- The site accounts for 2.3% of the total Highland economy and 2.1% of Highland employment

The report provides a valuable baseline to understand the sites local impact and for measuring future benefits from decommissioning activity.

[Economic Impact Assessment of NDA Sites - GOV.UK](#)

Dounreay Socio Economic Annual Review

The 2025/2026 Dounreay Socio Economic Annual Review is being finalised with an expected publication date in August.

Highland Investment Plan

NRS Dounreay continues to engage with the Highland Council and Hub North on the Highland Investment Plan (HIP). Work is currently being undertaken by NRS to develop plans or support projects on office accommodation, living accommodation (housing), and innovation. NRS Dounreay are currently engaged with a supplier to develop an accommodation strategy business case.

NRS Dounreay are also supporting work to develop a prospectus on the Thurso Life Long Learning and Innovation District, complementary activity to support UHI North, West, and Hebrides campus redevelopment.

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SCCORS

Magnus Davidson and David Calder presented the findings of the Just Transition Commission's visit to Dounreay to the Scottish Councils' Committee on Radioactive Substances on the 17th of June.

Grant Funding

NRS Dounreay continues to provide pre-application support for socio economic funding. Dounreay is running a heavily pressurised budget in 2026/2027 and is expected to draw down further additional funds from the NDA as per previous years.

The continued status of socio economic grant funding activities is recorded in Appendix 1, with new projects funded in the previous quarter outlined below:

- FR-000003149 – Wick High School Radio Club – East Caithness. £8,600
- FR-000003133 – Sidh C Art, Carnival of Plants. £15,712.60
- FR-000003192 – Association of Northern Trails Scotland, Pathways for Progress. £80,000

Please note the above values are the total award value from NRS Dounreay. Total project values may be higher.

Procurement

The following financial figures are for Q1 2026/2027, with the number of companies cumulative for Q1. It should be noted that the line items do not sum to any total.

Q1 FY26/27 Spend

- £ xM including Mandatory Spend
- £ xM of which is non mandatory and non-utility
- £ xM is with x companies that are Caithness owned
- £ xM is with x companies with Caithness resource*
- £ xM is spent with Caithness owned or resourced suppliers
- £ xM is with x SME Suppliers (Including Caithness SME)

*Includes some mandatory spend

FY = Financial Year, YTD = Year to Date

The socio economics team, working with the commercial team, continue to improve how Dounreay sets, assesses, and monitors social value across in scope procurements. Dounreay continues to manage social value commitments from procurement.

Staffing

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Recruitment continues to be carefully managed. Dounreay shares full details of all internal and external recruitment with the DSG Business Group to ensure transparency. An update was provided to DSG on 17 June for vacancies from 24 April to 11 June.

Dounreay currently has 12 paid summer students engaged on a 12 week block.

STEM

Nine teams from 8 primary schools in Caithness raced their Goblin Cars at Alford on Friday 12 June. The pupils were supported by NRS Dounreay engineers and apprentices from NRS Dounreay and Rolls Royce. Although none of the schools won, all pupils had a great experience. The travel and accommodation for all pupils was funded by NRS Dounreay.

Visits to Dounreay

- DSG site visit to see trade union members

**Magnus Davidson,
NRS Dounreay Socio Economics Manager**

**David Calder,
NRS Head of Socio Economics**

14/07/2026

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Appendix 1

Rolling status of socio economic grant funding activities. Paid to date is project in year spend. Project years may differ from financial years.

Funded Project	Completion date	Progress	Comments
Caithness Transport Forum	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £30,000 Yr 3 (26/27): £10,000 £10,000 paid to date.
Focus North Programme Manager	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: Up to £124,830 Yr 3 (26/27): Up to £42,459 £10,881 paid to date
STEM activities	N/A		Funding commitment: ongoing Total annual award £25,000 £12,794.54 paid to date
Dounreay Community Fund	N/A		Funding commitment: ongoing Total annual award £35,000 £9,975.50 paid to date
Ormlie Community Association	30/09/2026		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £60,000 Yr 3: £20,000 £20k paid to date
Dunbeath and District Centre	31/12/2026		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £ 149,630 Yr 3: £24,938 £24,938 paid to date
Science Skills Academy Newton Room Thurso	01/06/2028		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £128,000 Yr 1: £40,000 £40k paid to date
North Coast Visitor Centre (Highlife Highland)	31/10/2027		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award £265,000 Yr 3: £75,000 £0k paid to date
Community Plan and Delivery (Thurso Community Development Trust)	30/09/2027		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £200,000 Yr 2: £66,666 £50,000 paid to date
Masterplan Delivery Officer (UpNorth! CDT)	01/03/2027		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £36,551 Yr 2: £18,177 £18,177 paid to date

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Funded Project	Completion date	Progress	Comments
Destination Strategy and Venture North (CCoC)	31/03/2028		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £342,000 Yr 2: £121,084 £63,833 paid to date
Apprenticeship Programme (CBF)	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £150,000 Yr 2: £0 £0k paid to date
Future Skills Graduate Scheme	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £100,000 Yr 2: £0 £100k paid to date
Association of the Northern Trails, Trail Development Manager	01/07/2027		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £35,000 Yr 1: £35,000 £35,000 paid to date
Caithness CAB, Community Outreach	01/10/2028		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £176,644 Yr 2: £57,431 £0 paid to date
Redevelopment of the John O' Groats Playpark	31/10/2026		Funding commitment: < 1 year Total award: £50,000 £50,000 paid to date
Wick Community Hub	31/01/2029		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £90,000 Yr 2: £30,000 £0 paid to date
Apprenticeship Programme Caithness Business Fund	28/02/2027		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £150,000 £150,000 paid to date
Science 03 Caithness International Science Festival	31/03/2028		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £60,000 Yr 1: £20,000 £20,000 paid to date
Community Infrastructure Support Programme (NHI)	31/03/2029		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £200,000 Yr 1: £66,667 £66,667 paid to date
Community Resilience Fund (NHI)	30/04/2029		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £200,000 Yr 1: £50,000 £50,000 paid to date
NHI Farm Project	31/03/2029		Funding commitment: 3 year Total award: £200,000 Yr 1: £51,553

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Funded Project	Completion date	Progress	Comments
			£0 paid to date
Caithness Business Fund FutureSkills Flexible Training Scheme	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £200,000 £125,000 paid to date
Scottish Surfing Federation National Championships	01/04/2029		Funding commitment: 3 year Total award: £30,000 Yr 1: £15,000 £15,000 paid to date
Focus North Communications and Marketing Support	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £90,000 £0 paid to date
Wick High School Radio Club – East Caithness	05/10/2026		Funding commitment: < 1 year Total award: £8,600 £0 paid to date
Sidh C Art, Carnival of Plants	31/12/2026		Funding commitment: < 1 year Total award: £15,713 £0 paid to date
Association of Northern Trails Scotland, Pathways for Progress.	30/06/2026		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £80,000 £0 paid to date