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Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

SPACE HUB SUTHERLAND

JUNE 2021 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the eleventh newsletter from Space Hub Sutherland. Thank you for signing up to receive our updates. Please feel free to share this newsletter with anyone who may have an interest in the project. If you wish to receive paper copies to display or hand out, please email spacehubsutherland@hient.co.uk.

COMMUNITY

Community Liaison Group

The SHS Community Liaison Group (CLG) met on 22 April 2021. The main topic of discussion was the process for developing a Visitor Management Plan. Further work is being carried out to understand the potential visitor numbers that may wish to visit when a launch takes place and an update will be provided to the CLG at their next meeting.

PROGRAMME

Planning

- After the Highland Council granted planning permission in August 2020, HIE submitted an [application for development](#) to the Scottish Land Court. The application received one objection, lodged jointly by three individuals, and the court hearing was held over two weeks beginning 18 May 2021. A ruling from the Court is anticipated later in the summer.
- The Court of Session held a three-day hearing, starting on 8 June, following Wildland's petition for judicial review of the Highland Council's planning decision. The court is expected to announce the outcome of the judicial review within the next three months.

Programme activities

- Detailed [ground investigations](#) were carried out over a four-week period, starting in late May. Specialists appointed by HIE gathered further information on ground conditions that will inform the detailed design of the space hub development. Information on the peatland across the area was also obtained which will help to ensure the impact of the development on peatland and hydrology is minimised. Further bird surveys were undertaken before the start of the ground investigations and continued while the contractors were on site to ensure there was no disturbance.
- During ground investigations an Ecological Clerk of Works was present to inspect drilling areas and access/egress to ensure there was minimal impact to the peatland and no birds were disturbed, particularly any breeding pairs that may have been in the vicinity. Regular toolbox talks and briefings were provided to the site team on subjects including the protection of ground nesting birds, reptiles and otters. Over the next two months, the investigators will continue periodic visits to monitor borehole installations on site.

The ground investigations team were very grateful to Melness Community Centre for the use of this facility as a site office and temporary compound. The team enjoyed their time in Sutherland and wish to thank local residents for their support during these investigations.

- Work continues to develop a *space cluster strategy*, maximising the local impact of Space Hub Sutherland. This is being led by Caithness Chamber of Commerce on

behalf of CNSRP (Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership). Working with a range of partner organisations, an eco-audit of current supply chain capabilities is underway alongside other workstreams that will support the development of the strategy.

OTHER INFORMATION

Media

- Scotland on Sunday [reported](#) on the Space Hub Sutherland project.
- Space Hub Sutherland featured on Channel 4 News on 17 June 2021.
- Various newspapers carried articles on the Judicial Review held in June.
- The P&J ran an [article](#) in early June regarding the peat restoration plans for Space Hub Sutherland.
- HIE issued a [news release](#) on 24 May 2021 to highlight the start of the ground investigations, which was widely reported.

UK Space Agency

- Dr Paul Bate has been appointed as [CEO of the UK Space Agency](#) with a mission to continue the success of a sector that will play a vital role in the UK economy. Dr Bate is due to take up his appointment on 6 September.
- Following on from the laying of the Space Industry Regulations in Parliament on 24 May, preparations are being made for the Civil Aviation Authority to take on the spaceflight safety regulator role, subject to the regulations being approved by Parliament. As progress towards the regulator being set up, the CAA plans to start engaging directly with industry stakeholders to keep everyone updated and to provide information for potential applicants.
- UKSA has published the [LaunchUK guide](#) to the UK's commercial spaceports to help promote the UK's spaceport offer.

- As part of UKSA's G7 communications activity they announced a new [competition](#) tasking individuals and groups aged 16+ to design a nanosat suitable for launch from a UK spaceport. This forms part of our wider STEM strategy to inspire and engage young people and build the future space talent pipeline. Further information is on the [competition registration page](#).

Orbex Space

- Our launch partner Orbex has received planning permission for an engine test facility at RAF Kinloss. The location is close to their factory in Forres.
- Orbex continue to attract [investment](#) to support the roadmap to a first launch of the firm's Prime rocket from Space Hub Sutherland spaceport.
- Orbex has recently recruited Kirsteen Mackay to undertake the role of Space Port Preparation and Support Manager, the first of many space-related jobs we expect to be based in Sutherland.

Got questions? Check out our website

Our website is the best place to find information about the project, including frequently asked questions. You can access the information at www.spacehubsutherland.com.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit our website: spacehubsutherland.com or please get in touch: spacehubsutherland@hient.co.uk

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