

Green Freeport Quarterly

Together, realising our potential

Inverness & Cromarty Firth
Green Freeport

a free trade zone

ISSUE 03 | FEBRUARY 2025



Port of Inverness



Update from the Chief Executive

WHEN I WAS FIRST APPOINTED AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF INVERNESS AND CROMARTY FIRTH GREEN FREEPORT, I OFTEN SPOKE ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF THE HIGHLANDS. BUT AS WE MOVE INTO 2025, IT'S CLEAR THE GREEN FREEPORT IS NO LONGER JUST A CONCEPT – IT'S ACTIVELY SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE REGION.

Since our inception, our partners and associates have moved with real energy and momentum to position the Highlands as a leader in the green energy transition. We achieved some landmark moments, from securing significant inward investment, to progressing our full business case and showcasing what we can offer.

With the eyes of the global renewables industry fixed firmly on our shores, I'm confident there will be more announcements of significant inward investment to come.

With that, we're going to see an increase in the number of opportunities for the supply chain – everyone from local electricians and joiners to hospitality providers – and firms will need to start scaling up.

This will lead to a spike in recruitment and opportunities for apprentices and trainees.

What we need to be mindful of, however, is that growth and opportunities will not be without their challenges. As the green freeport continues to create jobs and attract investment, there will be an increased demand for housing, services and infrastructure.

But the Highlands has always been known for its strong sense of partnership,

and this collaborative spirit will be key to navigating these challenges. It's going to take a lot of work but everyone I speak to across the north of Scotland – and beyond – understands what's at stake. There's a real determination to make it happen.

We started the year by hitting an important milestone in the first quarter with Port of Nigg being awarded customs site status by HMRC. The designated area sits outside the UK's normal custom rules and benefits from simplified processes and reduced costs associated with handling goods to and from the area.

We expect full business case to be signed off by the UK and Scottish governments in the very near future. Once approved, it will enable us to allocate over £25 million in seed funding to a wide scope of projects across the region.

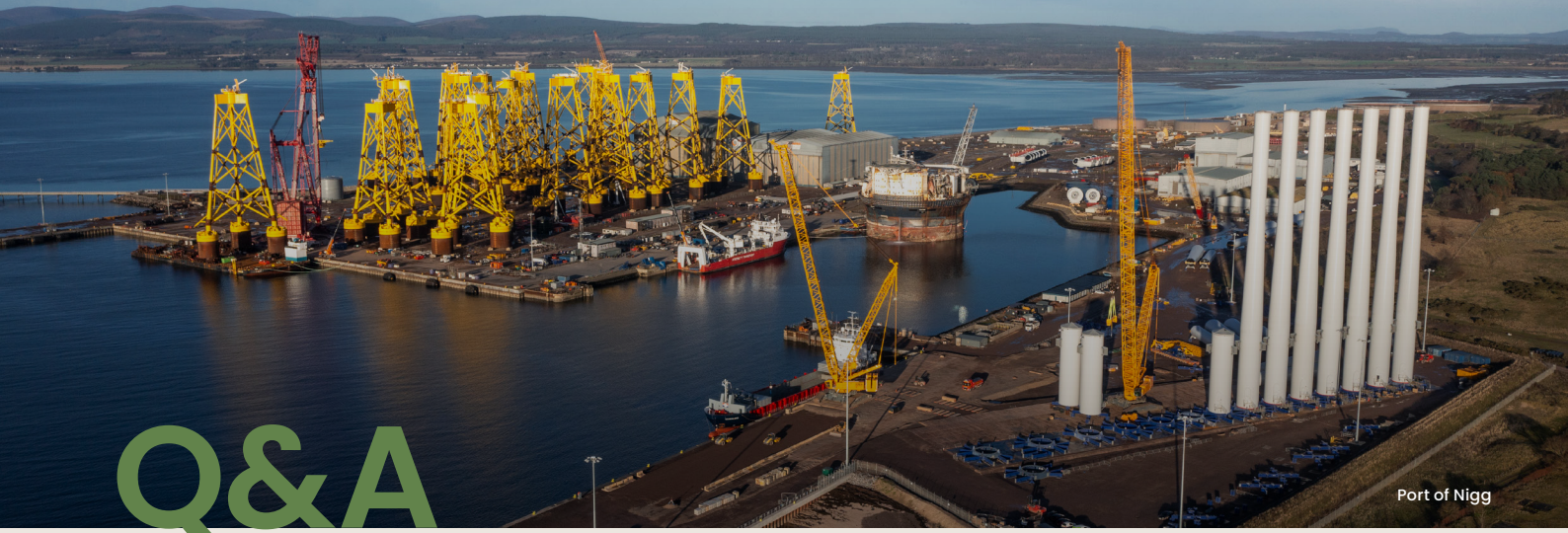
I hope to be able to provide some concrete progress in the next edition of our newsletter, but meantime read on to learn about new additions to our team and the awarding of customs site status to Port of Nigg.

CALUM MACPHERSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ICFGF

LATEST PROGRESS

- Port of Inverness adopts green marine fuel to support sustainable operations
- Ardersier Energy Transition Facility selected as preferred site for Cerulean Winds strategic hub
- LISTEN NOW: Our first skills podcast is live on Spotify
- The Powerhouse joins forces with Highland legal firms to offer drop-in support service





Q&A

New Customs Site at Port of Nigg

Q What is a customs site, and why does it matter?

A A customs site is a designated area within the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport that benefits from simplified customs processes and reduced costs when handling goods. This means businesses can import, store and export large industrial components more efficiently, making the site more attractive for investment.

Q Why was the Port of Nigg chosen for this designation?

A The Port of Nigg was selected because of its well established security and cargo handling processes. It is a major hub for the offshore wind and energy industries, and achieving customs site status enhances its ability to attract businesses involved in these sectors.

Q How will this impact the local economy?

A The customs site status at Port of Nigg is expected to generate significant economic benefits for the Highlands. The designation makes the area more attractive for companies looking to manufacture and transport heavy engineering components, ultimately creating long-term opportunities for local workers and businesses.

Q What kind of businesses will benefit from this?

A The primary beneficiaries are companies in the offshore wind and renewable energy sectors. The customs site designation encourages businesses that manufacture and transport components like offshore wind foundations, subsea cables and steel structures to use the Port of Nigg as a base.

Q Does this mean the port will be handling consumer goods like food and drink?

A No, the port is specifically geared toward handling large industrial components. It will not be used for the transit of consumer goods like food and drink.

Q How does this relate to the new Sumitomo Electric factory?

A Sumitomo Electric Ltd is currently building a £350 million subsea cable manufacturing plant at the Port of Nigg, where it will create 150 highly skilled jobs. The customs site status will make it easier for the company to manufacture and export HV/DC cables, and was one of the reasons why Sumitomo selected the site.

Q What are the benefits for businesses using the customs site?

A Businesses operating within the customs site can store equipment and cargo for extended periods without incurring duties. They also benefit from duty suspension on imported goods, no export duties on products used in British waters beyond the 12-mile limit, as well as simplified customs procedures for imports and exports

Q How does this help the region compete globally?

A With customs site status, the Highlands can better compete in the global offshore wind and renewables market. By reducing costs and streamlining processes, the region becomes more attractive to investors, helping to establish it as a major European hub for green energy development.

Q What happens next?

A Other ports within ICFGF can apply for customs site status when they wish. As more businesses take advantage of the customs site and tax benefits, we can anticipate increased investment, job creation and economic growth for our community.

Q Where can I learn more?

A For more details about the customs site designation at the Port of Nigg, [read the full announcement](#) on our website.





Meet the team

TEAM AT ICFGF EXPANDS WITH KEY APPOINTMENTS

We're delighted to announce that the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport team is growing. Alison Wilson has joined as Investment and Development Manager while Amy Parry joins as a member of our board.



Amy Parry

BOARD MEMBER

Amy will provide the board with valuable insights from the offshore wind sector, which is crucial to the future growth of the green freeport.

As a Senior Project Manager at BlueFloat Energy | Nadara Partnership, she leads the development of the Broadshore Hub (Broadshore, Sinclair & Scaraben) floating offshore wind projects. Given that these projects are located off the Moray Firth coastline, the Partnership actively collaborates with the supply chain, local communities and ports in the Inverness and Cromarty Firth area, with a strong focus on skills development and attracting talent to the sector.

With over a decade of experience in marine environmental science and project management within the renewable energy industry, she is deeply committed to advancing Scotland's green energy transition and economic growth.



Alison Wilson

INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Alison has over 25 years' experience in economic development and joins us from UHI where she was Director of Economic Development and Advancement, focused on developing partnerships and collaborations, driving development opportunities and advancing the university's philanthropic presence with stakeholders.

She led UHI's involvement in key regional growth initiatives, including ICFGF, and investments in renewable infrastructure. Her extensive career has always centred around relationship-building, and at UHI engaged with various stakeholders including industry partners, government bodies, charitable trusts, foundation and alumni.

A holder of the prestigious National Women of Influence Award from the Customer Contact Association, Alison also worked with Highlands and Islands Enterprise and has a significant track record in business and financial services, inward investment and business engagement.

Alison's role with the green freeport will be crucial as we progress and seek to capitalise on opportunities for inward investor at local, national and international levels.

"We're incredibly lucky to welcome both Alison and Amy to the green freeport," said Chief Executive Calum MacPherson. "They have a proven track record in their respective fields and will be able to add a unique perspective to our operations as we move into this next important phase of our evolution. We're delighted to have them as part of ICFGF and to work with us on our overarching ambition of placing the Highlands at the heart of the new energy revolution."



ICFGF at a glance

520

TOTAL HECTARES
OF QUALITY
USEABLE
LAND



11,300

Number of
long-term
jobs across
the Highlands

£6.5bn

GREEN FREEPORT
INVESTMENT
OVER 25 YEARS



3,564m

Total quayside
within the
Green Freeport



7

Prime
locations
ready for
development

STRATEGICALLY
POSITIONED
for ScotWind
success



FAIR WORK CHARTER

A core
requirement

Strict UK &
Scottish
regulations

Ensure Excellence



Stay up to date with the latest developments at [greenfreeport.scot](https://www.greenfreeport.scot)



Ardersier Energy Transition Facility

UHI House, Old Perth Road, Inverness, IV2 3JH
T: 0333 091 1985
E: info@greenfreeport.scot

www.greenfreeport.scot



Transforming the Highland Economy and
Delivering National Energy Security