

[News story: Secretary of State meets the team decommissioning Dounreay](#)

He talked with the new starters and some of the site's existing apprentices who are helping to take apart ageing facilities while learning critical skills that could be transferable to other industries in the future. Mr Clark also met armed officers from the Civil Nuclear Constabulary who protect the site 24 hours a day.

His visit came after he saw the site earmarked for the UK's first satellite launch pad located around 40 miles from the former fast reactor research site in Caithness. With decommissioning well advanced, Dounreay and its partners including the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) have worked closely with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to support the space proposal as part of efforts to ensure sustainability and growth for the area beyond the closure of the site.

Chief Nuclear Officer Steve Beckitt said: "It is important that we have the right skills to safely decommission our highly complex plants and so we are delighted that 10 engineering and science graduates have decided to move to the area and join our team this year. It was a privilege to introduce them to the Secretary of State on their second day in the job, which I think reflects the important work they will be doing and the role that young people can play in ensuring a highly skilled future for Caithness and Sutherland."

Mark Raffle, NDA Lead Programme Manager, added: "We welcomed the opportunity to brief the Secretary of State on the work being done at Dounreay, the important role played by CNC in managing the security of the site and its nuclear material, while also introducing him to some young people just starting their careers."

Dounreay is Scotland's largest nuclear decommissioning project and is widely recognised as one of the most complex nuclear closure programmes. The work is being delivered by Dounreay Site Restoration Limited, a company owned by Cavendish Dounreay Partnership, on behalf of the NDA.