

News story: UK Government funding for vertical launch spaceport in Sutherland

A proposed vertical launch spaceport in Sutherland has been awarded £2.5 million in funding by the UK Space Agency to develop a ground breaking launch site. The UK Space Agency is a UK Government body.

UK Government Business Secretary Greg Clark will today [16 July 2018] launch the start of a Great British Space Age that will see vertically-launched space rockets and satellites take off from a new spaceport at Sutherland on the north coast of Scotland.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

As a nation of innovators and entrepreneurs, we want Britain to be the first place in mainland Europe to launch satellites as part of our modern Industrial Strategy. The UK's thriving space industry, research community and aerospace supply chain put the UK in a leading position to develop both vertical and horizontal launch sites.

This will build on our global reputation for manufacturing small satellites and help the whole country capitalise on the huge potential of the commercial space age.

In addition, the UK Government is also making available a new £2 million fund to boost further horizontal launch spaceport sites across Britain – such as Glasgow Prestwick.

Welcoming the announcement Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

The UK Government is driving the commercial space age and Scotland is leading the way. We are investing £2.5 million in a vertical launch site in Sutherland which will create hundreds of new jobs. And we will invest a further £2 million in horizontal launch sites – Prestwick is in the running for that and I wish them well.

Scotland is uniquely positioned to pilot the UK's commercial space sector and the UK Government recognises this potential. The opportunities are considerable, launching a new age for British industry.

The commercial space sector is estimated to be worth a potential £3.8 billion to the UK economy over the next decade and will support Britain's modern

Industrial Strategy by creating high-skilled jobs and boosting local economies.

UK Space Agency selected the Sutherland site because Scotland is the best place in the UK to reach highly sought-after satellite orbits with vertically launched rockets.