

RenewableUK chief upbeat about Humber's supply chain prospects despite 'disappointing' SeAH loss

RenewableUK deputy chief executive Melanie Onn has urged the Humber offshore wind community not to dwell on the loss of a major inward investor, with the belief there are plenty more opportunities to come.

[South Korean steel giant SeAH's decision to head north](#) after apparently docking at Able Marine Energy Park for monopile manufacturing was a huge blow for the region, with 750 jobs and hundreds of millions of pounds of investment pledged.

A second manufacturer looking to land, tower producer GRI Renewables, has yet to state its position publicly, with multiple operators understood to be required to realise the [South Humber Bank site](#).

Read more: [Orsted chief outlines mission ahead as Humber role in offshore wind ambition explored at OWC22](#)

Much appears to now depend on future contract wins in the accelerating bidding rounds.

Ms Onn, the former Grimsby Labour MP, addressed Offshore Wind Connections 2022. She said: "The political will is there to back rapid growth of the sector and the industry wants to make it a success. So when, in the past, we've talked about creating the right conditions for confidence in renewables, we now have all the key ingredients and no – or very few – excuses not to go for it."

Outlining jobs projections of 10,500 for the Humber – the

second highest percentage of the 69,000 jobs envisaged for the UK, with only Scotland above – she said: “We are already seeing some of this come to fruition with the expansion of Siemens Gamesa in Hull. “Although disappointingly the planned investment for towers and foundations companies south of the river hasn’t come off this time, the sustained political vigour towards wind energy for the UK supports the conditions for areas to go after new investments, and the Humber is ideally placed with key operations and maintenance facilities through Orsted and others like RWE, end-to-end vessel services, flexible ports and an innovation centre with ORE Catapult.

“What is critical is that we don’t miss out on any opportunities again, either by becoming distracted with other potential solutions when the answer is staring us in the face, or disheartened by some of the challenges.



Offshore Wind Connections 2022 launch reception speakers, from left, Stephen Parnaby, Melanie Onn and Andrew Oliver.

“RenewableUK’s focus is on making sure that the UK delivers on

renewable energy at pace and at scale. Let's get as much clean, green, cheap energy into the system as we can, let's do it now – and smash through some of those bureaucratic barriers – and then we can see the wider benefits flow and we can fulfil that ambition of being the Saudi Arabia of wind.”

Ms Onn had quoted the Prime Minister's reference to the Humber earlier, and highlighting the 20GW upgrade in 2030 target since 2018, she also highlighted the £130 million port infrastructure fund, freeports and the recent launch of a Climate Transition Taskforce by the Treasury, adding to several others with the sector at heart.

“It is a very busy space,” she said. “There is so much more to come and every reason to be optimistic about the future.”

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Humber Marine and Renewables merger praise



Andrew Oliver of Team Humber Marine Alliance and Jonathan Goolden of Grimsby Renewables Partnership sign the papers to merge and create Humber Marine and Renewables at Offshore Wind Connections 2022.

There was a strong endorsement for the merger of Team Humber Marine Alliance and Grimsby Renewables Partnership from Ms Onn.

Humber Marine and Renewables has emerged as the new name for the combined organisation, having announced the intention last summer.

Andrew Oliver, chairman of THMA, had [revealed the completion](#) on the opening night at RenewableUK's Connect event, after Ms Onn had spoken on stage.

Congratulating them as she took to the stage at Bridlington Spa, Ms Onn said: “It is the right decision for organisations in this area, where there is a common aim, to join forces and speak with a single voice to ensure that there is clarity and cut through to their audience, whether that is the general public or government.

It is essential that regardless of local authority set-up or local enterprise partnership formal arrangements, that this area shows that it can work together, that it can act as a focal point to drive industry forward and really generate momentum that does bring more inward investment, does create more jobs and importantly – something I have naged on about for a long time – helps in the creation of a new identity for the area, based on new ideas, new technology, new solutions and shows an area collaborating well between istels as well as connecting with other clusters.

“Humber Marine and Renewables is vital in developing a plan for how the Humber sells itself in relation to this sector – to develop that clear identity, an area that can become known for its specialism. I look forward to seeing that develop and supporting those efforts in any way we can.”

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