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ANCHORING SUCCESS



Port's value to Peterhead economy is huge – NEW REPORT

Peterhead Port makes a substantial economic contribution to the local economy, generating £830 million in gross value added and supporting almost 8,000 jobs – but the potential for further growth is enormous.

That is the conclusion of a major study carried out for the PPA Board and senior management by BiGGAR Economics.

Since 2012 the Port's local economic impact has increased by almost 50%, to £406m GVA and 3,225 jobs.

More than £22 billion worth of energy-related investment is expected to be made in the region within the next 10 years, and the Port has developed its own masterplan to maximise the benefit to the town and immediate area.

By investing in an extension of the deepwater Smith Quay alone, the report concludes that PPA could be generating an additional £39.7 million GVA per year and supporting 515 jobs.

PPA chief executive Graeme Reid said: "Peterhead Port underpins the economy of the town and the surrounding area, supporting as it does both the energy and fisheries supply chains.

"As we all know, the energy scene is changing and Peterhead is perfectly positioned to help deliver the transition – in fact we are already doing so with our planned extension of Smith Quay and deal with MDL for its new Energy Service Base.

"As I have said before, it is important, however, that this is done in a just fashion, and this study underlines just how important oil and gas continues to be to the local economy. Government needs to recognise this and shift course accordingly before important skills are lost forever."

The report notes that £163.3m GVA and 940 jobs in Peterhead are provided and supported by the oil and gas supply chain.

Fishing is responsible for a similar level of economic benefit (£143.4m GVA and 920 jobs respectively), while fish processing provides £55.9 million GVA and supports 940 jobs.

Given its geography, Peterhead is well placed to support the delivery of multiple renewable energy projects, including offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, hydrogen and decommissioning activities.



PPA and MDL deal for new Energy Service Base

Peterhead Port Authority has agreed to lease more than 14,000 sq m of land at Smith Embankment and grant access to Smith Quay to Maritime Developments Ltd.

The company will invest over £12 million over the next three years at the new MDL Energy Service Base, which will provide handling and storage services for power cables and mooring lines destined for new offshore wind developments.

Graeme Reid, chief executive of Peterhead Port Authority, said: "The collaboration with MDL is a proud moment for Peterhead and a testament to the strength of our local supply chain and potential of our local community. By welcoming this new facility, which will take advantage of the Port's fantastic existing and planned infrastructure, we're not only supporting the future of offshore energy but also creating meaningful opportunities for local people and businesses.

"It's about building a sustainable future together – one that keeps Peterhead at the heart of innovation while staying true to our roots as a hardworking, forward-looking port town."

The multipurpose facility will also be used as MDL marine operations base and will host its portable flex-lay technology for offshore deployment, as well as project management and engineering services for managing vessel mobilisations - consolidating the company's 25-year presence in the town since its inception.

A render showing how the new MDL Energy Service Base will look.



Derek Smith, CEO of MDL, said: "This new Peterhead facility is a milestone in MDL's journey – purpose-built to support the energy transition, but with immediate value for today's operations. With direct access to the quayside, it strengthens our ability to offer turnkey support to offshore contractors and operators, through a central hub for equipment preparation, servicing and support.

"As offshore wind activity ramps up, the sector will need dependable partners with the track record and knowhow to support every phase of the project lifecycle – from construction through to ongoing field operations.

"From dynamic risers and buoyancy modules to cable connectors and mooring lines, these complex systems demand ongoing care and expert handling – and that falls exactly within MDL's 25-year expertise.

"At the same time, we are perfectly placed to support maximising output from existing operations through timely operations and maintenance response, as well as enabling efficient decommissioning scopes for those end-of-life projects – making this a base designed specifically for the future, but very much considered for the present.

"From fishing to oil and gas, and now renewables, MDL has always been about servicing the life of the field – and this base reflects that legacy while preparing us for the future of energy in the North Sea. It's another step in our ongoing drive to innovate, diversify and support the sector through every chapter of its evolution.

"And so, the MDL Energy Service Base is not just a reflection of our ambition, but of our deep-rooted commitment to serving the marine and energy industries for the long term."



Generous support for local community

**Peterhead Port Authority provided almost
£70,000 worth of support to community
organisations, charities and events during 2025.**



Visitors enjoying the SeaFest
Peterhead event in September.

Photo: Camryn Forman for PPA

The donations are very much in line with PPA's Trust Port ethos and commitment to the town and surrounding area.

Among the events supported this year were SeaFest, which made a successful return to the calendar, attracting around 20,000 people from as far afield as Cornwall.

We also supported Scottish Week, the Fishing News Awards, and SEA2SEA – The Great Caledonian Swim.

The Port continued its sponsorship of the Scottish Maritime Academy Deckhands Course, which runs three times a year and provides students a gateway to the fishing industry or Merchant Navy.

Peterhead FC also benefited from sponsorship as did the KIMO Fishing for Litter Scheme.

Monies were raised for Shirley Space Mental Health, Peterhead Foodbank Centre and Men in Mind.



Mackerel prices drive up landings value

The value of fish landed at Peterhead Port topped the £330 million mark by the end of November thanks to significantly higher mackerel prices.

While the overall volume traded across the quaysides fell from 219,269 to 184,333 tonnes compared to the same 11-month period last year, the gross value reached £332,272,688, up from £257,288,470 in 2024.

PPA chief financial officer Stephen Paterson said: "This impressive growth in value was due to an unprecedented increase in value per tonne of mackerel, which doubled over the year in anticipation of steep cuts in quota for this species in 2026."

Pelagic landings overall (also including herring and blue whiting) reached 122,271 tonnes (down from 159,229 in 2024) by 30th November, grossing £207,145,114 (£143,253,386 in 2024).

Whitefish landings, meanwhile, were broadly stable, at £107,107,250 (55,328 tonnes) in the first 11 months of the year compared to £100,184,023 (54,502 tonnes) in 2024.

Shellfish landings showed a significant improvement on 2024, up to £18,020,325 (6,734 tonnes) from £13,581,061 (5,538 tonnes).

Significant quota cuts for 2026 for key commercial species such as cod and mackerel will heavily impact landing volumes in 2026 and potentially beyond.





New processing units under development

Work has begun on developing six new state-of-the-art fish processing units to replace those at Albert and Volum Street which are to be demolished.

The units, at Gerries Yard, were acquired by PPA in 2023 for £750,000.

The £2.7 million redevelopment order was placed in November to Oakley Food Projects.

The overall investment is therefore £3.5 million and the Port is grateful to Marine Fund Scotland for some grant assistance.

Solar panels have already been installed and it is hoped to have the site up and running by mid-2026, allowing for the demolition of the units at Albert and Volum Street.

PPA chief executive Graeme Reid said: "This is a much-needed development for the industry and the Port. Availability of this type of fish processing unit is extremely limited in the area, and we already have tenants secured for the units.

"Once demolished, the site at Albert and Volum Street will be marketed for re-use as, for example, a larger scale processing facility or alternative use."

Meanwhile, it has been a successful first full year for the new Port-owned ice facility at Greenhill Quay, which supplies bulk flake ice to the fishing industry and processors.

More than 10,000 tonnes have been delivered by the unit and the jobs of those from the previous Peterhead Ice company have been preserved.





Preparations for new E-auction in Fish Market

Preparation work is at an advanced stage for the introduction of the E-auction within Peterhead Fish Market.



Equipment has been delivered and set up for testing the system, which it is hoped will come into operation in early 2026.

Training of personnel has also been taking place, including on a new grading system.

Peterhead Port Authority (PPA), which operates the Fish Market, has signed a landmark licence agreement with P&J Johnstone Ltd and Don Fishing Ltd for the provision of auctioneering services at the E-auction.

Under the terms of the five-year agreement, the two companies will jointly operate as licensed auctioneers, bringing decades of industry expertise and trusted relationships to the digital auction platform.

The PPA Board decided in December 2024 to proceed with the E-auction in place of the traditional shout auction, and Belgian firm Aucxis, which has extensive experience of providing e-auction platforms, was chosen to bring in its KOSMOS system.

In September 2025, Marshall Birnie was appointed as Fishing Business Unit Manager to oversee its introduction.

The E-Auction system will offer real-time bidding, secure transactions and remote access for buyers across the UK and Europe. The involvement of two respected local firms reinforces Peterhead's reputation for excellence in the seafood industry and supports the continued growth of sustainable fishing practices.



Vision partners together at the document launch.

Energy transition will create 8,000 high-value jobs for Peterhead in next decade

More than 800 jobs will be created every year as £1 billion is invested in Peterhead and the surrounding area in the next decade to support the energy transition, according to a comprehensive 2025 study of the region's prospects.

The town's rich skills base and supply chain capability will enable it to earn £626 million across a wide range of projects from carbon capture and storage to offshore renewables, transmission networks and hydrogen.

Once fully operational, these projects will generate an additional £71 million in gross value added (GVA) and support 820 jobs every year in the local economy.

The figures come from an analysis undertaken by BiGGAR Economics for the Vision document published earlier this year by the Peterhead Energy Transition Forum.

The Vision aims to:

-  Promote Peterhead and Aberdeenshire more broadly as prime locations for business and investment;
-  Support economic development through targeted initiatives;
-  Enhance collaboration between the public and private sectors;
-  Strengthen the visibility and competitiveness of the region nationally and internationally.



Seamus Logan, MP for Aberdeenshire North and Moray East, who wrote the foreword for the report, said: "Through investment, strategic partnerships, and ongoing community engagement, Peterhead is positioning itself as a forward-thinking coastal town, ready to seize future opportunities and enhance the well-being of all who live and work there."

"Peterhead is a prime location for energy sector investment. With its existing strong, diverse skill set and supply chain capability, the area is clearly ready for the journey of growth and transformation."

Keith Mackie, Head of Business Development – Energy Transition for Peterhead Port Authority, said: "Peterhead is at the forefront of the energy transition in Scotland, and its unique physical and human geography mean it is poised to be the focal point for a wealth of transformative and innovative projects in the coming years."

"We are pleased to present this Vision document to showcase our strengths to the investment and business communities as well as government bodies and the general public."

Alison Hall, Head of Project Development at SSEN Transmission, added: "At SSEN Transmission we plan to invest at least £22bn in new, nationally critical clean energy infrastructure, and this investment is a key enabler of the energy transition and the economic benefits it will bring to communities across the north of Scotland."

"With our proposed Netherton Hub, and current and proposed Eastern Green Link projects, we are playing an important role in creating prosperity in the Peterhead area through local employment and supply chain opportunities, as well as other benefits."

"Already we have seen the positive impact of our activities through contract awards to established local companies engaged in construction work on Eastern Green Link 2, as well as the launch of an associated community benefit fund that will deliver over £2m for local communities."

"Together with our partners in the Peterhead Energy Transition Forum we are committed to delivering prosperity to the area and creating a positive legacy – we welcome publication of the Vision document that outlines the scale of the economic opportunity for Peterhead, as it plays a key role in national clean energy and energy security ambitions."

Peterhead Energy Transition Forum comprises a group of local companies and organisations working to enable mutually beneficial domestic and inward investment activity.

With support from Scottish Enterprise, participating organisations are: Aberdeenshire Council, ASCO, Augean, Balfour Beatty, BAM UK, Dales Engineering Services, Invest Aberdeen, JBS Group, Maritime Developments Ltd, Motive Offshore, Nomad Infrastructure, Peterhead Developers Forum, Peterhead Port Authority, Score Group, Scottish Maritime Academy (part of NESCol),

SSE Thermal, SSEN Transmission and Storegga.

The Vision is aimed at a diverse group of stakeholders, from investors to local businesses, government bodies and the general public.

It centres on four pillars – collaboration, transformation, decarbonisation and prosperity – that are underpinned by proximity.

Collaboration is central to the way businesses already operate in Peterhead, connecting local enterprise and a well-established supply chain. It is a place where academia, industry and government work together to drive innovation, solve complex challenges and unlock shared value.

With huge potential on its doorstep, Peterhead is leading the charge in transforming the energy sector – from digitalisation to decarbonisation to diversification, it is embracing new technologies and ways of working.

Through a raft of proposed energy transition projects, Peterhead is a key player in the transition to net zero for Scotland and the UK.

The energy transition is a shared goal, from economic, environmental and social perspectives. So this work is not only about achieving commercial success, but contributing to a thriving region, creating jobs, upskilling communities and fostering resilience.

Critically, Peterhead is strategically important for energy developments for several compelling reasons – geography, infrastructure and industry. Proximity to North Sea energy resources means immediate access to oil, gas and, increasingly, offshore wind assets, which in turn means reduced transit times and lower logistics costs among other advantages.



Highest standards achieved at Peterhead Port Authority

Peterhead Port Authority has secured two new internationally-recognised awards for its environmental and quality management systems.



With PPA having previously achieved recognition for its occupational health and safety system, it is one of just a handful of ports in the UK to hold the ISO 45001, ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 quality marks.

The Port is also the only one in the UK with the BRGCS AA standard for Peterhead Fish Market.

PPA chief executive Graeme Reid said: "This is a tremendous achievement for the Port, and is testament to the dedication of our staff who have worked extremely hard to ensure that our systems and processes reach the highest possible international standards.

"It provides assurance to Port users, stakeholders, staff and the community that we are committed to their wellbeing and safety as they go about their work.

"But we are not complacent – we will continue to seek improvements in everything that we do in line with our ethos as a Trust port that seeks always to enhance our services and infrastructure."