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### :: Wilson Gives Boost To Wave Power

10 January 2002

Energy Minister Brian Wilson today announced plans for a cluster of wave power stations in the Western Isles which are expected to lead to the creation of manufacturing jobs within the islands.

Speaking in the House of Commons, he said: "This is an exciting development which will greatly advance the development of shore-based wave technology. I am delighted that the developers, Wavegen, intend to locate the manufacturing process locally."

Mr Wilson said:

"I am pleased to announce that one of the UK's major electricity companies, Scottish and Southern PLC are working with Wavegen to develop a proposal for a cluster of offshore based wave power stations in the Western Isles. The intention is that these will be technically innovative and will act both as demonstration plants and also as commercial generators to supply Scottish and Southern

"Wavegen are currently undertaking surveys in the Western Isles to establish suitable sites for these developments and are working up outline project proposals.

"It is their hope and intention that a key feature of these plans will be the use of the former Arnish fabrication yard for manufacturing. Wavegen are now in touch with the owners of Arnish, the Stornoway Trust. The use of Arnish for this purpose is entirely compatible with the intention of Amec and British Energy to use the yard for manufacturing purposes related to their proposed windfarm on Lewis."

"My Department is, in principle extremely supportive of this proposal for the further development of shoreline and near-shore-based wave power and I expect that we will be asked by Wavegen to consider their proposals at some point within the next three months.

"I know that these comments will be particularly welcomed by Hon Friend, the Member for the Western Isles whose commitment to the development of renewable energy is well established, and also by the Western Council whose initiative in creating an Energy Innovation zone has helped to stimulate all of this activity."

Islay has the only commercial wave power station in the world, with a capacity of 500 kilowatts. This was developed and installed by an Inverness based company, Wavegen. We have announced support for the development by the same company of an offshore device, which is likely to be tested in Orkney. Momentum will also be maintained on the shoreline and near shore systems and to encourage the refinement of that technology.

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