

For immediate release – 13 May 2022

Wind Turbine Blade Recycling Project Kicks Off

A pioneering new project gets properly underway this week to develop Britain's first wind turbine blade recycling pilot plant.

Project PROGrESS is a £2million, three-year scheme, that is part-funded by Innovate UK and leading industry partner Aker Offshore Wind, and seeks to deliver a circular model for wind turbine blades to support the UK's ambitious climate change targets. Led in Scotland, it will benefit the wider UK economy and create green jobs.

Partners in the world-leading scheme met for two days at the University of Strathclyde's Advanced Composites Group (ACG) facilities and at the Lightweight Manufacturing Centre (LMC) – a specialist centre within the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS) Group, as work starts on the three-year project.

At present, when wind turbine blades reach the end of their working lives there are only two options - send them to landfill or to waste-to-energy plants where they are combusted.

Project PROGrESS aims to commercialise a revolutionary method developed by the University of Strathclyde, separating glass-fibre and resin components in composites to recover the glass-fibre component, which can then be reprocessed, moulded and reused.

The project is overseen by Composites UK, with the expertise of researchers at the University of Strathclyde, the LMC, University of Nottingham, SUEZ recycling and recovery in the UK, composites distributor GRP Solutions and composite part manufacturer, Cubis.

Sarah Lord, Sustainability Projects Delivery Manager at Composites UK said: "We are excited to see Project PROGrESS officially up and running.

"It's fantastic for both the steering group and project group to meet up in person in Glasgow at such an exciting time for PROGrESS. It's a great opportunity for our joint hosts ACG and LMC to demonstrate key aspects of their technological excellence with our commercial partners Aker, GRP Solutions, Cubis and SUEZ."

Liu Yang, Head of the ACG at the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering added: "It is a great pleasure to meet all of our partners at the campus and showcase what we are doing in the area of composites recycling and sustainability. We are strongly committed to this partnership and are looking forward to working together."

Zhe Liu, Sustainability Lead at the LMC, concludes: "Through this project, we are looking forward to supporting the wind sector's approach to net-zero. Our knowledge and skills bring benefits to the partnership along the whole supply chain, including sustainable design and manufacturing, remanufacturing & end-of-life recycling."

For more details about Project PROGrESS contact Composites UK via info@compositesuk.co.uk.

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About Composites UK:

Composites UK is the trade association for companies working in the UK's fibre-reinforced polymer composite supply chain. Its focus is to encourage and promote its 370 member companies through furthering knowledge, lobbying government via the Composites Leadership Forum, facilitating networking and supporting industry growth.

www.compositesuk.co.uk

About Aker Offshore Wind:

Aker Offshore Wind is an offshore wind developer focused on assets in deep waters and specialized on floating energy systems. With global operations, the current portfolio consists of development projects and prospects located in Asia, North America and Europe. Aker Offshore Wind effectively deploys cost effective technologies from decades of offshore energy development. The company is majority-owned by Aker Horizons, an investment company dedicated to creating value and reducing emissions from renewable energy and decarbonisation technologies.

www.akeroffshorewind.com

About University of Strathclyde:

The University of Strathclyde is a leading international technological university based in the centre of Glasgow. Inspired by our founding principle as 'a place of useful learning', our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of our students, to society and to the world.

www.strath.ac.uk

About the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS):

The National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS) is a group of industry-led manufacturing R&D, innovation and skills facilities supported by a network of Partners across Scotland, all working together to transform the future of manufacturing.

NMIS is operated by the University of Strathclyde. It is supported by the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Island Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Renfrewshire Council and the Scottish Funding Council. It is part of the UK's High Value Manufacturing Catapult.

www.nmis.scot

About the Lightweight Manufacturing Centre (LMC):

The Lightweight Manufacturing Centre (LMC), operated by University of Strathclyde, is the first new specialist technology centre within the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland Group.

Officially opened by the First Minister in June 2019, the £8.9million centre in Westway Park, Renfrewshire focuses on working with and developing novel lightweight solutions to help manufacturing businesses face and overcome the challenges of the modern-day world.

www.strath.ac.uk/workwithus/lightweightmanufacturingcentre

About Innovate UK:

Innovate UK drives productivity and economic growth by supporting businesses to develop and realise the potential of new ideas. We connect businesses to the partners, customers and investors that can help them turn ideas into commercially successful products and services and business growth. We fund business and research collaborations to accelerate innovation and drive business investment into R&D. Our support is available to

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businesses across all economic sectors, value chains and UK regions. Innovate UK is part of UK Research and Innovation.

www.innovateuk.ukri.org

About University of Nottingham:

The University of Nottingham is a research-intensive university with a proud heritage. Studying at the University of Nottingham is a life-changing experience and we pride ourselves on unlocking the potential of our students. We have a pioneering spirit, expressed in the vision of our founder Sir Jesse Boot, which has seen us lead the way in establishing campuses in China and Malaysia - part of a globally connected network of education, research and industrial engagement.

www.nottingham.ac.uk

About SUEZ recycling and recovery UK:

SUEZ recycling and recovery UK is a business unit of the global SUEZ group. In the UK, SUEZ employs over 5,600 people, operating across hundreds of sites, and handles in excess of 10 million tonnes of waste materials every year – a significant proportion of the UK's total waste. Through collection, treatment, recycling and logistics operations, it serves more than 30,000 business customers and millions of householders throughout the country.

www.suez.co.uk/en-gb

About GRP Solutions:

GRP Solutions Ltd has a highly experienced team of composite and adhesive experts, dedicated to setting the standard in composite distribution. Working with world class suppliers the company prides itself in offering the very best solutions and service to customers. Growing from strength to strength, GRP Solutions provides customers across every sector of the UK with the most comprehensive range of composite solutions and services.

www.grp-solutions.com

About Cubis:

Cubis is the global leader in the design and manufacture of access chamber and cable ducting systems for infrastructure networks. Its innovative products are used in the rail, telecoms, road, water and power industries worldwide. The company says it is the first choice for customers seeking contemporary solutions that improve on traditional installation methods.

www.cubis-systems.com

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Photo:



Caption: Project PROGrESS partners at the kick-off meeting.

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