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The City Square Project

Oil & Gas UK has two principle strategic objectives:

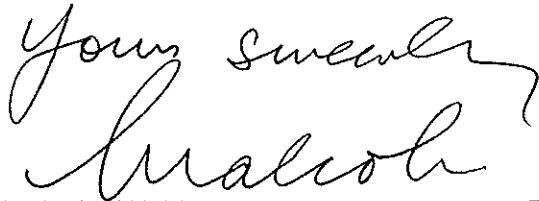
- The first is to work to help maximise the recovery of the up to 25 billion barrels of oil and gas remaining to be won from the areas offshore the UK. This is a task which will take several more decades of serious endeavour to achieve (the tales of the imminent demise of this industry are untrue) and one which must be undertaken in order secure a prize which is of paramount importance to the UK both in terms of economic contribution and the nation's energy security.
- Our second and linked objective is to promote the long term sustainable future for the UK oil and gas industry supply chain. This magnificent UK engineering success story currently enjoys a turnover of some £18 billion pa with £6 billion of that now coming from the growing export of oilfield goods and services. The largest and by far the most important hub of the UK oil and gas industry supply chain is undeniably centred on the city of Aberdeen. With time we can envisage the export trade outstripping the domestic business and indeed continuing as a long term wealth creator for this region for decades after the production of UK indigenous oil and gas has eventually begun to dwindle.

Aberdeen therefore can have a vital role to play in the achievement of these important national goals and this is a role which carries with it the prospect of many decades of strong economic contribution and activity from the offshore oil and gas industry. However if Aberdeen is to enjoy the full fruits of this opportunity and help keep our industry's supply chain anchored here it will have to markedly improve its social, business and transport (air, rail and road) infrastructure in order to continue to attract and retain oil industry investment in the region and help service its increasingly international scope of operations. To put it bluntly, today we see a world leading, high tech, twenty first century industry increasingly struggling to live in a city of the previous century and with a real and present danger that the gap between industry and city is widening.

In order to sustain itself as a destination of choice for leading companies and their highly professional and mobile employees Aberdeen itself needs to develop, improve and move forward. The City Square project is but one of the projects which will need to be undertaken. It can and should be a very significant first step forward. If however the city does not give its backing to this project and forgoes the opportunity to secure up to £70million of private sector finance for this transformational development, which, we understand, could be matched by a similar amount from the Scottish Government, it risks sending out a clear message that Aberdeen is not open to improvement and change and indeed, lacks vision for the future.

So Oil & Gas UK supports the rejuvenation of Aberdeen city centre including the re-development of the Union Terrace Gardens/Denburn Valley area to create a new civic space and a vibrant hub for the city and the region. The City Square project presents an excellent, possibly unique, opportunity to achieve this end and radically transform the city centre. We urge the City Council to give this project the support which it deserves and so enable it to progress.

I would be grateful if you would share this letter with the elected members of the Council and I am also copying this to Tom Smith as Chair of ACSEF.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Your sincerely Malcolm Webb'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Malcolm Webb
Chief Executive

cc: Tom Smith ACSEF