INVEST
ABERDEEN

PROSPECTUS
FOREWORD

The Invest Aberdeen team has been formed as a joint venture between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council with ambitious goals for attracting significant investment in the region.

To realise those objectives it is essential that we share our vision beyond our own doorsteps; Invest Aberdeen plays a central role by providing a concierge service for investors and businesses the world over and showcasing the sound investment opportunities we have in the region.

Invest Aberdeen is about far more than just promoting these opportunities. It is about opening the door to conversations, partnership working and relationship building to support the local economy now and for the generations ahead.

This pitchbook underlines the growing offering and significant investment opportunities we have here, as we build on key skills garnered from our experiences in oil and gas to see other areas of industry grow and flourish; renewables, low carbon, life sciences, food and drink, and digital.

More than £8 billion of public and private infrastructure investment is in the pipeline to be delivered in the region before 2030. Projects include: The Event Complex Aberdeen (TECA) with P&J Live, the home of Offshore Europe, at its heart. At £333 million, TECA represents the largest single investment in conference, exhibition and concert venues in the history of the UK; Aberdeen Harbour is benefitting from a £350 million infrastructure development whilst Peterhead Port has invested £50 million in its facilities, both transforming the marine support capacity of the Aberdeen City Region; whilst the total offshore wind project value in the region has reached £3.3 billion.

The vibrancy of our region has long been recognised. Our vision is ambitious yet our drive to use our ongoing transformation as a catalyst for further investment is ever-growing.

As civic leaders we’re incredibly enthusiastic about the possibilities – but it is important we share our story with new audiences and continue to gain the international traction the region merits.

We believe this document provides us with a tool to do just that as we prepare to write the next, exciting chapter in the story of the Aberdeen City Region.

Douglas Lumsden
Aberdeen City Council co-leader

Jim Gifford
Aberdeenshire Council leader
CONTENTS

5  Aberdeen City Region
6  Energy Transition
7 - 8  Invest Aberdeen
9 - 10  Financial Support Mechanisms
10  Scottish Futures Trust
11 - 14  Local Support Mechanisms
15 - 17  Setting up a Company

Case Studies
19 - 20  Build to Rent – Stoneywood
21 - 22  Infrastructure Transformation – Aberdeen International Airport
23 - 24  Mixed Use – Marischal Square
25 - 26  Residential – Chapelton
27 - 28  Infrastructure Development – Aberdeen Harbour South
ABERDEEN CITY REGION

Aberdeen is a global brand. From our position high on the east coast of Scotland, Aberdeen has exerted its influence right around the planet. Our long and proud tradition of invention and discovery – from subsea technology to the discovery of insulin and treatments for Cystic Fibrosis or even the first MRI scanner – demonstrates a fundamental element of our region’s DNA, to blaze new trails and shape the future for all.

Commonly known for our oil and gas industry, the region’s strengths don’t stop there. We are at the forefront of the global energy transition to a lower carbon world. We are an important centre for life sciences with world-leading health research. We are also home to food and drink brands that are enjoyed around the world.

Our international connections work both ways and our tradition of global trade has led to an incredibly diverse population.

Aberdeen has always been enterprising. Aberdeen has always reached out beyond our shores; our ongoing multimillion-pound investments in harbour infrastructure (£350 million at Aberdeen harbour and £50 million at Peterhead Port) ensures our maritime heritage remains at the very heart of our city region.

Aberdeen has moved seamlessly into scientific, engineering, digital and low carbon specialisms. The city has one of the largest concentrations of life scientists in Europe and the largest biologics cluster in the UK after Cambridge

Our city region is also globally important in the food and drink sector, hosting the iconic rule breakers, Brewdog and arguably the greatest whiskies in the world. Our roster of household brands also includes Mackie's ice-cream and Dean's Shortbread.

As well as being the home of the world-renowned Aberdeen Angus cattle, Europe's biggest seafood catches are landed at Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

Food and drink companies in the city region export to more than 100 countries around the globe.

Aberdeen is primed for business, and the Invest Aberdeen team are on hand to welcome you here.

ENERGY TRANSITION

The Aberdeen City Region may be known as Europe’s oil and gas capital, but it is so much more. Aberdeen is becoming a world class all-energy hub utilising the local expertise, transferable skills and supply chain to lead the region towards a low carbon economy and at the forefront of hydrogen technology in Europe.

An emerging symbol of this great transition is the world’s first floating windfarm by Equinor, off the north-east coast by Peterhead. And in Aberdeen Bay, Vattenfall's offshore wind test and research centre is Scotland's largest offshore wind test and demonstration facility.

These renewable innovations sit alongside NorthConnect, Peterhead, a £1.5 billion project providing an electricity link between Scotland and Norway to increase the use of renewable power. In addition, the UK and Scottish Governments have committed funding to develop a world-leading carbon capture and storage project based at Peterhead.

Aberdeen has had 5 years of successful hydrogen demonstration projects to date, including 65 hydrogen vehicles, the largest fleet in Europe, and 2 publicly accessible hydrogen refuelling stations. The region has plans to move the market from demonstration to commercialisation with plans for the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub, a commercial hydrogen production and supply facility that will open up the commercial possibilities for multiple sectors. The brand new £333 million state-of-the-art events complex, TECA, is powered by an innovative energy centre making it the most sustainable venue of its type in the UK. Aberdeen Harbour South, a £350 million project, is also using technology and innovation to further reduce its carbon footprint as well as becoming one of the most environmentally friendly ports in Scotland.

Aberdeen is continually innovating and leading the drive towards a low-carbon economy, cementing the region’s reputation as a renewable energy hub.
Invest Aberdeen is the inward investment hub for the Aberdeen City Region providing a single-point of contact to explore opportunities for your business. The team is committed to delivering a tailored service to meet your needs whether it be business support and guidance, providing one point of contact for a new business venture, capital investment or property development opportunity in the city region as well as signposting advice to other investment support specialists.

**HOW WE CAN HELP**

**Business development and support**
A rapid response to all investment enquiries and a dedicated single point of contact within the Invest Aberdeen team to co-ordinate your interest.

**Investment incentives**
Assistance in identifying any incentives that may be available and supporting your investment decisions by providing information on grants, loans and other funding as well as support in navigating property and business rates.

**Talented workforce**
Whatever the talent mix your business requires we will bring together the relevant agencies to deliver a skills and recruitment package that meets your needs.

**Access to partners and networks**
This includes introductions and sign-posting to financial and specialist assistance available through Invest Aberdeen’s partners and stakeholders. We can also offer a fast-track introduction to planning support and other council services.

**Investment advice**
Local market intelligence helping you form an accurate picture of what is happening in the Aberdeen City Region.

**Marketing Support**
Platform to help get your local success story out there, whether it’s the growth of your business or a new product hitting the market place we’d be happy to share your investment news across our various platforms.

**Dedicated aftercare**
A local team working across Aberdeen City and Shire to introduce and welcome you to the city region and link you to relevant local events and business networks.

**INVEST Aberdeen** is your one-stop-shop to ensure all of your business requirements are catered for. Contact the team to find out more.

**ABERDEEN CITY REGION - FIVE REASONS TO INVEST**

1. More than 25% of Scotland’s leading businesses are located in the region.
2. Global Energy Hub: one of the top 5 energy cities in the world.
3. Exceptional digital connectivity: announced as the first city in Scotland to benefit from gigabit speed fibre broadband investment.
4. Two world class universities producing Scotland’s most employable graduates.
5. Internationally renowned strengths in Renewables & Clean Tech, Oil & Gas, Technology & Digital, Life Sciences and Food, Drink & Agriculture.
FINANCIAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS:

Tax Incentives for Investors:
If you’re investing in certain companies, social enterprises or venture capital trusts, you may be eligible for tax relief from several schemes:

- **Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS)**
  EIS is designed so that companies can raise money to help grow their business. It does this by offering tax relief to individual investors who buy new shares in your company.

  Under EIS, a company can raise up to £5million each year, and a maximum of £12million in the company’s lifetime.

- **Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS)**
  SEIS is designed to help companies raise money when they’re starting to trade. It does this by offering tax relief to individual investors who buy new shares in the company.

- **Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR)**
  SITR is designed to help social enterprises or charities raise money to support the trading activity. It does this by offering investors tax relief on their investment if the qualifying conditions are met.

- **Venture Capital Trust (VCT)**
  You can invest shares in a VCT. A VCT is a company (like an investment trust) that’s been approved by HMRC and invests in, or lends money to, unlisted companies.

- **Tax Incentives for Research and Development (R&D)**
  The Aberdeen City Region is a great place for R&D and Scotland offers generous incentives for businesses investing in innovation.

  The tax on any profits from inventions you patent in Scotland and the rest of the UK is only 10%, compared to the usual 20% corporation tax. If your business is a sole trader, partnership or limited liability partnership (LLP), you do not pay corporation tax and are therefore not eligible for this relief.

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

Looking for investment funding for your company or development project?

Scottish Investment Bank (SIB) helps small to medium-sized enterprises access finance and can co-invest alongside private partners.

It can also help connect you with Scotland’s globally-recognised business angel community, including the national angel association, LINC Scotland.

Global companies that SIB have helped find investment include: Encompass, Computershare, Farmflo, Asystec and Xilinx.

INVESTMENT FOR JOBS

Will your project create or safeguard jobs in the Aberdeen City Region?

If so, you may be eligible for Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) grant.

You can apply for RSA if you have a base in Scotland, helping your business to grow. This will also help ensure your project helps the local economy to remain globally competitive.

The amount offered depends on the:
- Size of your business
- Location of the project
- Amount needed for the project to go ahead

SCOTTISH FUTURES TRUST

Growth Accelerator:
A funding mechanism to support the effective delivery of public sector enabling infrastructure where there may be an existing gap to private sector investment that will have a positive impact on the wider economy. The model supports delivery of investment that will result in positive economic, financial and social impacts. This allows the public sector to invest in infrastructure to support private sector investment on a payment-by-results based model to facilitate inclusive economic growth.

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF):
Programme as a way of securing infrastructure investment that unlocks regeneration and inclusive economic growth. The mechanism seeks to capture locally generated, incremental public sector revenues (e.g. nondomestic rates) that would not have arisen were it not for investment in the delivery of “enabling” public sector infrastructure.
LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

The Aberdeen City Region has a range of supporting incentives that will help you set up your business here. These are administered by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council respectively. Business Gateway and Scottish Enterprise also offer support locally.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTRIBUTIONS EXEMPTION

In 2015 Aberdeen City Council adopted its City Centre Masterplan, a 25 year vision for the transformation of the City Centre.

A key objective of that plan is to increase the population living in the City Centre. Recognising the complexity of developing within the City Centre, and to encourage new development to come forward, Aberdeen City Council has approved a two year exemption on the requirement for new residential development to provide affordable housing.

This exemption runs until 31st December 2020, during which time proposed new developments will have to complete the planning process.

Full details are available on the Aberdeen City Council website, www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BID)

A Business Improvement District (BID) is part of a city, town, tourism and visitor area, commercial district, in which businesses work together to invest in local improvements.

In 2017, Aberdeen became the first city in Scotland to be crowned Best European BID (Business Improvement District) by the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Berlin.

Aberdeen BID covers the heart of the city centre and contains the main retail, office and leisure areas. Led and funded by the city centre business community, its aims are wide ranging, designed to reinvigorate the city centre for the benefit of all who work, live, shop and visit. Businesses are working together to invest collectively in their environment, delivering initiatives and improvements over and above those delivered by Aberdeen City Council.

The aim is not to act as a substitute for central or local government, but to invest in additional projects to deliver on the objectives set out in the business plan.

More detailed information can be found: www.aberdeeninspired.com

EMPLOYMENT RATE

79.4%  
(Scotland = 74.3%)  
(Sept 18-Oct 2019)

ABERDEEN HARBOUR:  
£1.5bn GVA  
AND 12,000 JOBS

1.2 JOBS  
per working aged person

IN ABERDEEN CITY  
(Highest density of jobs in Scotland)
INVERURIE & PETERHEAD TOWN CENTRES

Business Improvement Districts have been developed in Aberdeenshire for both Inverurie and Peterhead. More information can be found on the We are Inverurie (www.weareinverurie.co.uk) and Rediscover Peterhead (www.rediscoverpeterhead.co.uk) websites.

SAB (SUPPORT FOR ABERDEENSHIRE BUSINESS SCHEME)

SAB offers assistance and practical business advice to both new and existing businesses throughout Aberdeenshire. It also provides discretionary financial assistance in the form of loans and grants:

Businesses can apply for SAB funding if your proposal can demonstrate that it meets certain criteria:

- to bring additional economic benefit to Aberdeenshire
- demonstrates viability
- has the potential to increase employment in the area
- proves there is a need for top-up finance over and above what is available on the open market or within the business
- does not have a detrimental effect on existing businesses in the area

PROPERTY INVESTMENT FUND (PIF)

The aim of the Property Investment Fund (PIF) is to bring prominent, redundant, town centre properties back into use through grant support. The property must have lain empty for at least six months at the date of application. Applications are open to individuals, community groups or businesses who own or wish to invest in property to bring new, sustainable uses to Banff, Macduff, Fraserburgh and Peterhead. Applications must be made and approved before work starts.

The structure of the fund is split into two phases:

Phase 1: Grants of up to £10,000 (or 50% of costs, whichever lesser) will be considered for feasibility studies, architectural drawings or quantity surveying work. Community organisations can apply for a grant covering 100% of these costs. If the total costs of the works identified at this stage outweigh the final value of development, or the return on investment is below a commercially acceptable value, a Phase 2 application will be considered.

Phase 2: Grants of up to £100,000 will be considered for physical building and renovation work. It is not expected that the contribution from PIF will come to more than 25% of the building and renovation work.

FIRST EMPLOYEE GRANT SCHEME

A £1,000 grant is available as part of the First Employee Grant (FEG) scheme to assist you with taking on a first employee in your business. Visit www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk to find out more.
SETTING UP A COMPANY

Registering your company
Registering a company in Scotland is simple. You can register as a private limited company online in just 24 hours.

Alternatively, you can register a UK establishment of your existing overseas company. This takes longer – usually about four weeks – because you need to submit additional documents and information.

Choosing how to structure your business
There are several ways you can structure your business in Scotland. The most common are:

- Sole trader – a self-employed person operating a small business
- Partnership – including Limited Liability Partnerships
- Limited company – either a private limited company (Ltd) or a public limited company (PLC)

Choosing the right legal structure is important because it will affect how you run your business, the control you have over it, and your legal obligations such as personal liability of the directors of the company. A lawyer or accountant can help you decide what's best for you.

Directors / Partners
Unlike other jurisdictions, there is no requirement under UK company law to have a 'local' director. Nor is there any requirement to enter into a relationship with a local partner/shareholder to carry out business in the UK.

Business Insurance
As a business in Scotland you must have:

- Employers’ liability insurance to cover compensation and legal costs if an employee (or former employee) suffers work-related injury or illness
- At least third-party motor insurance if you use vehicles in the UK. These are legal requirements. They’re also important for your business, as you could face serious penalties or significant costs without them.

There are other types of insurance which aren't necessarily legally required, but may be good to have. These include things like buildings insurance for your premises, product liability, public liability, professional indemnity, group travel and personal accident insurance.

Intellectual Property (IP)
Scotland and the rest of the UK have very strict intellectual property laws to make sure IP you’ve created is legally protected.

Taxes:
Scottish taxation is mostly governed by UK law and administered by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). But local taxes, like business rates, are controlled by the Scottish Government and administered by local authorities.

Corporation Tax:
Companies in Scotland must pay UK Corporation Tax on profits. The current Corporation Tax rate is 19%, reducing to 17% from April 2020. At 19%, Scotland and the rest of the UK have the lowest corporation tax rate of any G7 country.
You must register with HMRC to pay Corporation Tax within three months of starting your business.

If you do business as a sole trader, a partnership or a limited liability partnership (LLP), you do not pay Corporation Tax. But you must still pay tax based on the profits of the individuals involved in your business.

If you commercialise your patent in Scotland or develop a new patent here, you may benefit from the Patent Box scheme. This means paying reduced corporation tax on any profits you make by commercialising those patents - it could be as little as 10%.

**Value Added Tax (VAT)**

VAT is a tax on supplies of goods and services. Businesses in Scotland (and the rest of the UK) must charge VAT on the goods and services they provide if they are registered with HMRC for VAT (your business will be required to register if its turnover exceeds a set threshold).

The rate of VAT depends on the goods or services being supplied.

- The standard rate is 20%
- A reduced rate of 5% may be applied to certain supplies such as utilities
- A zero rate applies to certain supplies, such as books and children’s clothes

VAT regulations and administrative requirements are complex. You should seek specialist advice from a lawyer or accountant if you are unsure about the amount of VAT which you should be charging.

**Business Rates**

Business rates are collected by councils to help pay for local services. These ‘non-domestic rates’ are worked out on your property and if you’re the owner, tenant or occupier of a non-domestic building for business, you may need to pay them.

**Tax on imports**

Goods imported into the UK (and other EU countries) from non-EU countries are subject to import duties. These charges don’t normally apply to services.

**Opening a business bank account**

Getting a business bank account in Scotland can take anything from a couple of weeks to about three months, depending on the bank and type of account you choose.

Each bank has its own requirements and processes and will conduct security and anti-money laundering checks. A representative from your company, such as a director, usually needs to meet with the bank in-person to open the account and normally the company representative must reside in Scotland and the place of business address must also be based in Scotland.
BUILD TO RENT - STONEYWOOD

Forbes Place is Scotland’s first institutionally funded Build to Rent (BTR) development, comprising 292 apartments over four blocks and 16 three-storey townhouses.

Located approximately two miles south east of Aberdeen International Airport and the headquarters of BP and Schlumberger, the development occupies a 5.5-acre site within the Stoneywood Estate – a strategic 90-acre site acquired by Dandara in 2010. Originally master-planned for 576 residential units with ancillary commercial space including a 464sqm Marks & Spencer Food Hall and Café and 170sqm Co-Operative food store, the Stoneywood site received planning in 2012.

In 2014 Dandara were already in discussion with Aberdeen City Council to convert the 5.5-acre Forbes Place site from residential housing to a high quality BTR apartment scheme. At the same time, LaSalle Investment Management were actively seeking opportunities in Scotland having identified the residential BTR sector as an investment target and the two companies began exploratory discussions shortly thereafter.

Achieving consent for the new proposed scheme was not without its challenges. The development included a mix of 2-bed-2-bath units, 1-bed units and studios – which formed a vital component of the accommodation by providing Aberdeen’s highly mobile workforce with a more flexible alternative to hotel accommodation. However, at 30sqm the units were slightly smaller than average and with BTR having no unique planning status in Scotland there was also no reference point at the time of the application. Dandara and Aberdeen City Council’s Planning Department worked closely together by focusing on the dedicated BTR design, high level specification, and proven track record in the delivery of 2,500 similar units, to achieve the consent, and work commenced in Q2, 2015.

Unlike a traditional build-to-sell development, where construction takes place on a block-by-block basis subject to sales take-up, forward funding by LaSalle Investment Management enabled Dandara to place packages for the key development components up-front. The dedicated BTR design and specification also allowed for leading-edge construction methods such as pre-cast concrete panels with external brick elevations cast in-situ, windows fitted prior to arrival on site and pre-fabricated bathroom pods, thereby reducing preliminary costs.

A significant percentage of apartments are single aspect; however, every unit features extensive full-height glazing and has a useable balcony or terrace. Apartments feature high quality, durable kitchens and appliances and all two-bedroom units also have two bathrooms to cater specifically for ‘sharers’. At least one underground car parking space and superfast broadband of 100Mb are also provided.

The development in its entirety is operated for LaSalle Investment Management by Dandara Living. Working from a dedicated on-site office which is open seven days a week, the Dandara Living team provide a comprehensive lettings and property management service.

Following the industry standard design principles established in the mature ‘multi-family’ market in the USA, this pioneering project delivered a state of the art BTR development in just 23 months, leading the way for investment in Scotland’s fledgling BTR sector.

CONTACT:
Gavin Wyley - Managing Director
gwyley@dandara.com
Dandara
www.forbesplace.com

- dandara
award winning property
Aberdeen International Airport has been at the heart of the community since 1934. A £20million terminal transformation project began in 2015 which transformed the way passengers travel through the airport.

At the beginning of the project, there was a clear goal in sight – to significantly improve the passenger experience and limit the level of disruption to reach the end goal. The project began by demolishing a nearby vacant building in order to make way for the extension.

Electrical infrastructure was upgraded, and the passenger route to international arrivals was modified to enable essential construction works to take place. The passenger journey was directed by plenty of signage with support from airport staff who were on hand to help with any queries. Temporary domestic and international baggage reclaim facilities were relocated while groundworks were carried out.

This phase also involved the construction of a two-storey extension to the south of the existing terminal, making space for new arrivals and immigrations facilities, and new business lounges on the upper level. International baggage reclaim reopened to the public in May 2017, the domestic baggage reclaim was completed in July 2017.

Phase two was probably the most significant element of the project. It included a new security central search with fully automated security equipment and the latest screening technology. This allows passengers to move through the airport more quickly. Opened in June 2018, the new security area has more than doubled in size and can facilitate a greater number of passengers at one time.

The airport is currently in the midst of the final project phase, involving extensive reconfiguration to the remaining sections of the departure lounge, increased floor space and the introduction of new retail and catering outlets. At the end of September 2018, the first new pub and restaurant ‘The Distilling House’ opened.

Working with local groups and organisations relating to hidden disabilities led to a purpose-built toilet block which includes an accredited Changing Places facility. This has a hoist and moveable changing bed.

The aim is to have the terminal ready for the bi-annual influx of regular visitors to one of the world’s largest oil and gas conferences, Offshore Europe 2019, so the airport can truly showcase their improvements to the energy world.

CONTACT:
Gareth Bristo - Head of Capital Projects
gareth.bristo@aiairport.com
Aberdeen International Airport
www.aberdeenairport.com
MIXED USE - MARISCHAL SQUARE

Developed by Muse Developments in partnership with Aviva Investors and Aberdeen City Council, the £107million Marischal Square is a major mixed-use regeneration scheme located in the heart of Aberdeen. Fully funded by Aviva Investors, Marischal Square was completed in a single phase and comprises 177,000sqft of Grade ‘A’ office space over two buildings with secure parking, seven restaurants and cafés occupying 28,000sqft of ground floor space, a 126-room Residence Inn by Marriott and extensive high quality public realm.

The site was previously owned by Aberdeen City Council, which had occupied the 1960’s thirteen storey St Nicholas House as its headquarters, and presented a unique and challenging opportunity to create a vibrant new development with internal and external spaces that added to the city’s public realm, yet were commercially viable and brought a financial return to the council.

In addition to its prominent position opposite the iconic Marischal College, the 2nd largest granite building in Europe, the development has at its centre one of Aberdeen’s oldest and most loved buildings, Provost Skene’s House. The design cleverly juxtaposes the ancient and modern, with the 16th century building set off to best effect against the state-of-the-art granite and glass used in the 21st century construction.

The constrained city centre location presented considerable physical challenges; control of dust, noise and vibration from demolition, deep excavation and sheet piling works had to be overcome. Construction of the two storey underground car park was a significant challenge, involving complex underpinning to avoid the need for piling work adjacent to the ‘Grade A listed’ Provost Skene’s House.

Sustainability has been a key driver for the project, the buildings achieved a ‘BREEAM’ Excellent score and EPC rating of ‘A’. Marischal Square’s offices are the most energy efficient in the city which, coupled with the outstanding views and bright floor plates, has attracted high calibre occupiers seeking to improve efficiency and the working environment of staff. Aberdeen Journals, RBS, Tenaris and NHS have already taken space and international creative workspace provider, Spaces, is now onsite creating its flexible workspace on the first floor of 1MSq. Spaces’ offer of flexible terms and smaller suites will further enhance the variety of occupation options at Marischal Square.

Attracted by the opportunity to introduce ‘European style’ outdoor seating throughout Marischal Square, to date five high-quality leisure operators have been secured; Mackie’s of Scotland, All Bar One, Prezzo, Costa and Tony Macaroni. Marischal Square office workers, tourists and locals alike can have a coffee, meal or business meeting while enjoying views of gardens, ancient buildings and works of art. Marischal Square’s bright, covered courtyard is publicly accessible with ground floor café and restaurants and protection from the elements bringing people into a previously underused part of the city, creating a vibrant buzz.

The courtyard is also home to ‘Poised’, a magnificent steel leopard sculpture by renowned Scottish sculptor Andy Scott which forms the stunning centrepiece for Marischal Square. Inspired by the city’s coat of arms, this breathtaking artwork stands five metres tall with a five metre tail, weighs just over two tonnes, balances perfectly atop a ten metre high steel column and has been taken to heart by the business community and public alike.

Muse and its partners’ vision for this blighted site was bold and innovative, the new buildings and spaces have transformed this important part of Aberdeen, creating a lively, contemporary new area in the heart of the city centre and acting as a catalyst for further regeneration throughout the city.

CONTACT:
Morag Lyons - Marketing Manager
morag.lyons@musedevelopments.com
Muse Developments
www.musedevelopments.com

Marischal Square
NEW ABERDEEN

CONTACT:
Morag Lyons - Marketing Manager
morag.lyons@musedevelopments.com
Muse Developments
www.musedevelopments.com
RESIDENTIAL CHAPELTON -

In October 2013, ground was broken at Chapelton, a new town some eight kilometres south of Aberdeen. With the potential to include up to 8,000 homes sitting shoulder to shoulder with shops, schools, healthcare, employment and parks, Chapelton is one of the UK’s biggest new settlements.

Chapelton takes its form from a high-level master plan, the product of a 2010 charrette that brought together architects, engineers, local residents, councillors and others. The plan transforms 840 hectares of agricultural land into seven neighbourhoods plus a town centre, linked by a hierarchical network of roads and open spaces. Every neighbourhood contains a mix of housing types, from flats, to terraces, to large farm steadings. While the town centre is designed as Chapelton’s commercial and civic heart, shops, schools, dentists and other amenities are also distributed throughout the individual neighbourhoods. Residents’ daily needs will thus be accessible within a short stroll from their homes, encouraging the type of walkable, sociable lifestyles that towns and villages of the past seem organically to promote.

Chapelton’s design is also highly responsive to its locality. Wherever possible, existing features of the site are preserved, from woodlands, to farm tracks to watercourses. Large boulders dug up during excavation work have been reused for the town entrance sign or to mark plot boundaries. Its streetscapes and architecture are closely inspired by the most admired cities, towns and villages in North East Scotland; materials, block patterns and house types are drawn from regional precedents.

Replicating these traditional urban typologies in a contemporary context has proven a challenge for the Chapelton design team. Modern standards, particularly road standards, mean that it is very difficult to build the diversity and character of old towns. Contractors, meanwhile, have been tasked with meeting specifications that they had never tackled before. No firm in Scotland, it transpired, had practical knowledge of how to run metal rims along grass verges, for example. With time, this and other arts have been acquired.

The first inhabitants arrived in 2015. Since then, the EDC has striven to build community feeling, organising Christmas celebrations, charity bike rides and even gin tastings. Increasingly, though, community spirit is becoming self-engendering. Residents have staged Burns Night Celebrations and organised mother and baby groups. Chapelton is still at an early stage in its existence; there is perhaps another four decades of growth ahead of it. Yet, already it has the essence of a true town with a budding community ethos.

CONTACT:
Chris Pattison - Director of Planning
cpattison@turnberryuk.com
Turnberry UK
www.chapeltonnewtown.co.uk
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT - ABERDEEN HARBOUR SOUTH

Overview
Aberdeen Harbour is Britain’s oldest existing business, established in 1136. Today it is the premier marine support centre for the subsea engineering sector and oil and gas industry as well as being the main commercial port serving the North East of Scotland. Aberdeen Harbour is a Trust Port, governed by a local independent board. There are no shareholders or owners and any surplus is ploughed back into the port for the benefit of its stakeholders. Ever evolving, recent decades have seen over £200million in investment in facilities. The Trust Port’s latest development, however, is a single investment of £350million.

The Aberdeen Harbour South project is a £350million infrastructure development, transforming the marine support capacity of Aberdeen through the creation of over 1,400 metres of deep-water quay and over 125,000 square metres of quayside laydown area. It represents significant upscaling and growth opportunity for customers, who will have the ability to berth larger vessels. A development of national significance, the new combined harbour will become Scotland’s largest port in terms of berthing.

The development is supported by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Enterprise. The Aberdeen City Region Deal is delivering new transport infrastructure to improve connectivity from the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route via the Charleston Interchange on the A90 trunk road.

The resulting construction of new facilities in Nigg Bay, to the South of the existing harbour, will revolutionise the port’s capacity and will allow vessels of up to 300 metres plus to berth alongside. The extensive quay lengths, expansive laydown area and deep water channel will also transform the functionality of the port, allowing it to accommodate upscaled decommissioning, renewables and cruise industry activity.

Construction commenced on the project in May 2017 and the construction of the North Breakwater and dredging operations are now well advanced.

The new facilities are designed to allow the port to grow its oil and gas core activities whilst attracting new, upscaled activities from the widest range of sectors.

This site is allocated in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 as OP62 Aberdeen Harbour, for Harbour use. Around the new south harbour area are existing adjoining business and industrial parks both zoned B1 Business and Industrial in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017. These opportunity sites are located adjacent to major existing infrastructure including the Edinburgh to Inverness railway line and the southern junction of the Aberdeen bypass giving easy access north and south of the city.

The site is also close to the proposed Aberdeen Energy from Waste site which will produce both electricity and heat energy, a proposed solar farm, a Hydrogen fuelling station and the connection point for one of the offshore wind developments.

It is expected that this project will help create an additional 7,000 indirect equivalent jobs by 2035, injecting an additional £0.9billion GVA into the national, not just local economy.

CONTACT:
Matt North - Commercial Director
info@aberdeen-harbour.co.uk
Aberdeen Harbour Board
www.aberdeen-harbour.co.uk
Strategic Growth Areas

- Trunk Roads
- A Roads
- Regeneration Priority Area

Movement:

1. Aberdeen International Airport
2. Aberdeen Harbour South
3. Peterhead Port
4. National Decommissioning Centre
5. North Connect (Scotland / Norway power connection)
6. TECA - The Event Complex Aberdeen
7. OGTC - Oil & Gas Technology Centre

- MOWEL – Moray Offshore Windfarm (East) Ltd
- Hywind Scotland Pilot Park
- EOWDC - European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre
- Kincardine Offshore Wind Farm
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T: +44 (0) 1224 346145
E: enquiries@investaberdeen.co.uk
Twitter: @Invest_Aberdeen
Web: investaberdeen.co.uk
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