

May 2010

*Dear Aberdeen City Council,*

*I am writing to you as a former resident who maintains strong links to the city to ask you to reject further development of the City Square project as proposed by ACSEF and Sir Ian Wood.*

*The people were consulted about the City Square project in one of the largest public consultations ever held in Scotland. I understand that some 14,000 citizens took part and despite widespread and public concerns about pro-Square bias in both the execution and analysis of the consultation, the public still returned a clear majority against the Square. Those who did want some kind of change expressed a desire for formal gardens and a cultural centre, and these desires can be fulfilled without eradicating Aberdeen's only city centre park.*

*I urge you then on May 19th to listen to your electorate and reject plans to take the unpopular City Square project any further. Over £300,000 of public money has been spent asking the people what they think. They have responded with a resounding 'No' to losing their Gardens, 'No' to spending £90 million of public money on this project in a time of cuts to vital services and 'No' to losing the deliverable and sensitive plans of a new arts centre within the existing Gardens.*

*To carry on with the City Square would be an act of civic vandalism and abandonment of democracy.*

*There is no evidence that such a Square will benefit the city going forward. No robust business case can be made for spending £140million+ on filling in the Gardens when Union Street and other areas of the city are in need of regeneration and in the 21st century there can be no environmental case for using hundreds of tons of toxic concrete to fill in a mature green space.*

*We all want to see Aberdeen becoming a prosperous and vibrant place going forward. However, we need careful planning and sensitive decisions made by you, our Council leaders, so the future of the city is sustainable in a post-oil economy.*

*How many city centres have fallen victim to over-eager development and now resemble concrete wastelands?*

*Aberdeen's Union Terrace Gardens maybe underused but are still viewed as an asset by your constituents. I urge you to listen to them.*

*Annie Lennox*