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**WRITTEN STATEMENT**

**BY**

**THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**Title: Transfer of Development Land at Fabian Way to Swansea University**

**Date: 19 July 2019**

**By: Ken Skates AM, Minister for Economy and Transport**

As part of our commitment to decarbonisation, the Welsh Government has been working for some time with Swansea University to create a UK Centre of Excellence to drive the market adoption of buildings which can generate and store their own energy. Termed ‘active buildings’ the concept has the potential to radically change the way we design and build homes and offices in Wales and around the world.

In order to facilitate the construction of the facility known as the Active Building Centre (ABC), the University has secured £36m of funding from the ‘Transforming Construction – Building Better Buildings’ strand of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) and from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

The bid process required Swansea University to demonstrate match funding and wider support for the exciting proposals. The Welsh Government has developed a package of measures to demonstrate its support, of which the sale of land on which to locate the new facility is one important component. So I wish to inform Members today that I have approved the transfer of 3.39 acres of development land to Swansea University for £1. The land has a value of £440,000 and so represents an important contribution toward unlocking the significant match funding secured by the University through the ISCF and UKRI. The Welsh Government has always been clear it will look to provide support for important strategic projects where it can unlock funding from other sources. This collaboration is a good example of where that is able to happen.

The ABC will work closely with two other hubs across the UK in digital and manufacturing aspects of housing material development. It will build upon the success of Swansea University’s SPECIFIC project, which is developing and integrating its own and other technologies to demonstrate active building concepts at scale. The ABC Hub will work with private sector and government customers such as education, prisons, defence and housing to find solutions to overcome the existing barriers to roll out, associated with new concepts in energy strategies.

The ABC will be a not for profit Regional Technology Organisation established by Swansea University with a separate Board. SPEICIFIC at Swansea University will continue to grow and develop the technology pipeline and the demonstration of the concept at building scale. The ABC is supported by Tata, NSG, Coastal, Pobl, Cisco and other industry partners from energy and construction, and Welsh Government and UK Government stakeholders, to take forward the ambitious growth of active building adoption and the off-site manufacturing capability to deliver to market.

The economic impact and outputs of the ABC will:

* Create circa 50 high skilled jobs directly employed in the centre;
* Provide incubation of active building spin-outs/spin-ins and inward investment propositions for new market entrants;
* Develop robust principles for ‘Active Buildings’ to ensure standard specifications appropriate for different building typologies can be developed and adhered to;
* Generate a building energy design feasibility tool for technology integration and configuration;
* Work with building developers to demonstrate key segments and critically gather performance data of occupied buildings;
* Produce initial design and performance specifications as part of a programme of government led strategic sectors (schools, industrial, prisons).

The above outputs will help the achievement of a number of Welsh Government policy objectives, including decarbonisation, high quality employment and innovation.