

Professor Jon Gluyas
Chairman of the Board of BGS
British Geological Survey
Kingsley Dunham Centre
Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5GG

23 February 2010

Dear Jon,

The Future of the BGS Core Store, Edinburgh

I write to you on behalf of the members of the PESGB on the basis that we encompass the vast majority of users of the BGS Core Store at Gilmerton, Edinburgh, despite being excluded from the consultation process in 2009. Today we are publishing on our website the results of a survey of members' views on the proposed closure of the Edinburgh facility which you can see at www.pesgb.org.uk. In summary 77% believed the core store should remain in Edinburgh and 89% of active users thought so. You will also see that in the March PESGB Newsletter I have stated my own analysis of the situation and what should be done to resolve it.

As you know we met with Professor Ludden last week to share these results and I proposed that a Steering Group of the real stakeholders should be set up to reconsider the way forward. Professor Ludden appeared to reject this on the basis that the decision was in the hands of higher authorities.

In view of this, I am writing to you as Chairman of BGS to ask your Board to reconsider their position and recognise that the only politically acceptable way forward is to form the Steering Group with a remit to consider;

- What is the purpose of the Edinburgh Core Store – a passive academic archive or a practical working facility or something else?
- What are the true economics of the current operation, what are the future economic constraints, and what are the financial numbers behind alternative ways forward?
- What is the most optimal, viable solution to meet the agreed purpose within the defined economic constraints?

I also request that you invite Professor John Underhill to present to the Board a paper on behalf of the users of the Edinburgh facility, outlining the case for retention.

For your information I attach copies of letters to NERC and DECC asking them also to take a more pragmatic approach.

I ask you to ensure that the Board consider this issue very carefully in the context of the remit and strategic role of the BGS, particularly with respect to the geoscience community in the oil & gas industry and the research and educational establishments that support it, and I encourage you to act as the voice of reason.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,



Henry Allen
President PESGB
Cc Professor John Ludden, Executive Director
Cc Professor John Underhill, University of Edinburgh