

Press release

For immediate release

AJ Woods engineers growth at Port of Sunderland

A THRIVING engineering company is turning to Sunderland as it gears up for growth, in a move that could bring up to 60 jobs to the city.

AJ Woods Engineering Ltd, headquartered in Essex, specialises in complex offshore structures for the renewable, oil and gas industries. The company has announced that it will set up offices, stores and workshops at a facility in Port of Sunderland, allowing it to tap into the high demand from both existing clients and companies looking for services in the North East. The decision to have a presence in Sunderland was made after the business spotted opportunities to be part of the construction and maintenance supply chain linked to the offshore renewable energy sector.

AJ Woods Engineering Ltd, which is currently carrying out its main operations from a temporary site in Durham, and a workshop and offices at the Port of Sunderland is now able to carry out large scale ship mobilisations. The company has the ability to carry out mobilisations on all types of vessels ranging from small wind farm support vessels to cable laying ships and large jack up barges.

Robert Day, business development manager at AJ Woods Engineering Ltd, said the addition of their Sunderland facility represented an important step forward for the company.

He said: "The company is pleased to be associated with the Port of Sunderland, who together with Sunderland City Council, have been extremely helpful - we are looking forward to a mutually beneficial long term working relationship, with what we consider to be a very forward-thinking city.

"The area is ideally situated for our expansion plans, due to its strategic location and I've had the pleasure of being able to see firsthand the highly skilled pool of local labour available in the North East, which means the choice to employ locally is not only an easy decision but it's an exciting and rewarding prospect.

"We have been approached by companies within the industry and are hoping to work on further developments at the port to create activity and subsequently, what I hope to be a strong presence in Sunderland."

The expansion at Port of Sunderland will allow AJ Woods Engineering Ltd to develop its plans to offer a full package service to the marine and energy service and to work in close proximity of both

existing and new clients in the North East, with the hope of employing some 60 members of staff as the business grows.

Councillor Paul Watson, leader of Sunderland City Council and chairman of Port of Sunderland, said: "As a forward thinking, innovative city, we are always keen to attract like-minded businesses to the area.

"Sunderland has a clear vision for growth and with such vast investment and opportunities being created at Port of Sunderland, we are sure that AJ Woods is the first of many businesses that will see great benefits in choosing our city as a location in which to grow their enterprise.

"We have a fantastic port that is really starting to carve out a strong reputation, and we really do believe that it could hold the key to a stronger city economy. The backing we are giving to the port demonstrates our commitment to it, and of course, as a council, the work we are doing has already been recognised at this year's prestigious MJ Awards, at which we were named Best Achieving Council."

Matthew Hunt, port director at Port of Sunderland, added: "Port of Sunderland is well suited to meet both the current and future demands of the North Sea oil and gas and the offshore renewable industry sectors. A J Woods Engineering Ltd's decision to expand their business within our Port area is a great coup for the city, as not only will we see an increased volume of offshore and subsea vessels on site, which in turn increases the use of the port's cargo and marine services but it is set to create wider opportunities for local employment within the community.

"Sunderland is fast growing its reputation as a leading port of call, both for the subsea engineering and growing offshore renewable energy sectors and it's great to share AJ Woods Engineering Ltd's vision for growth within the North East."

For more information about Sunderland and the Port of Sunderland visit www.makeitsunderland.com, email info@makeitsunderland.com or call +44 (0) 191 305 1194.

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