

contributions to the discourse in recent months, I know that many of us now look to your Committee to help bring this matter to a sensible and workable conclusion.

In respect of the planning matters before your Committee, the significant submission from English Heritage is clearly particularly relevant. Whilst neither you, I nor other reasonable people are always content with the presentation of many aspects of "Cornish" Heritage as "English" Heritage the professional assessment of the merits of the "heritage assets" and the "historic environment" both as a respected body and as the Government's statutory agency for this kind of planning application cannot be ignored.

The submission itself brings us right back to the proposed considered "exploration" and now appraisal of "workable alternatives". English Heritage could hardly have made this point in a more forthright manner. In spite of my cautions to the Council months ago, I fear that this important project may now have been placed in serious jeopardy with the risk of the loss of substantial public funds because the Councils driving the project appear not to have given this aspect sufficient priority.

I therefore urge your Committee to accept the statutory advice of English Heritage, ensure that an alternative scheme or schemes are rapidly brought forward to address the very element of the proposal which might otherwise scupper the whole project – i.e. the 2nd of the "three main elements" of the plan as described in English Heritage's letter to the Council and find an acceptable planning solution for this project.

I would be pleased to have an opportunity to discuss this further with you.

With good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew George MP
Tel: 01736 360020
Fax: 01736 332866

File ref: 09/16.7

cc: Ruth Lewarne CC
Tamsin Williams CC
Mario Fonk CC
Roger Harding CC
Sue Pass CC
Penzance Town Council
Simon Ramsden, English Heritage

-----Original Message-----

From: COOPER, Ursula [mailto:CooperU@parliament.uk]

Sent: 08 December 2009 15:05

To: nplummer@cornwall.gov.uk

Cc: rlewarne@cornwall.gov.uk; healingcornwall@aol.com; Fonk Mario CC;

sales@rcharndingandson.co.uk; spass@cornwall.gov.uk; Simon Glasson; RAMSDEN, Simon

Subject: Isles of Scilly Ferry Link - Penzance Harbour

Dear Cllr Plummer,

ISLES OF SCILLY FERRY LINK – PENZANCE HARBOUR

As you may know, I have taken a close interest in the project to protect and improve the Isles of Scilly Ferry Link since its inception 6 years ago. I am therefore naturally sorry that I will not be able to attend the public meeting you have called this Thursday, 10th December 2009, to consider one important aspect of the proposal, namely the planning application for what has become known as Option A for Penzance Harbour. As you might expect, I will be in Westminster at that time.

I had previously resolved, as is customary, to leave decisions which have to be made locally to those elected to the local authorities which are charged with making the decision. However, I became concerned about the initiative, fearing that the whole project and the £30m of public money which had been secured for it might be put in jeopardy. I stepped in earlier this year in an attempt to broker a review of alternative options to that which had emerged from the then owners of Penzance Harbour – Penwith District Council – and other members of the Route Partnership.

The options review reported at the end of August and Cornwall's Cabinet resolved in September to, as you know, pursue both Option A and an alternative option involving an out of town freight depot – Option C – in parallel.

As well as convening the meetings which oversaw the review mentioned above, I then undertook 7 public meetings on the subject throughout the constituency – 6 on the Isles of Scilly and 1 in Penzance. This gave me an opportunity to better understand the anxieties which many people had been expressing about the project and/or the risk of it not succeeding, etc. About 80 people turned up to the meetings on Scilly – including repeat attendances from the Island Council's senior officers and members – and over 500 attended the meeting in Penzance.

Whilst I may have a private view on many aspects of the project, I continue to strongly support the principle of the project itself – namely, the improvement of ferry transport links between Penzance and the Isles of Scilly.

In these circumstances I have steadfastly sought to encourage a calm and rational consideration of these difficult issues. In the main this has been achieved and I must pay a particular tribute to some of the officers of Cornwall Council and its predecessor County Council for their professionalism and integrity. Although your Council's portfolio holder and some on Scilly may not have aided either their case nor the prospects for the calm resolution of the remaining challenges with their own