

# True Friends of Penzance & Isles of Scilly

[www.truefriend.org.uk](http://www.truefriend.org.uk)

Elmsdale  
Alexandra Road  
Penzance  
TR18 4LZ

Tel: 01736 331734

Email [dick.cliffe@truefriend.org.uk](mailto:dick.cliffe@truefriend.org.uk)

Mrs Fozia Chughtai  
Head of Group  
Regional & Local Major Projects  
Department of Transport  
(sent by email: [fozia.chughtai@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:fozia.chughtai@dft.gsi.gov.uk))

12 October 2010

Dear Mrs Chughtai,

## **Penzance Harbour – Alternative Proposals (Option Pz)**

I apologize for intruding on your busy day with this representation but I have been made aware that you are receiving a deputation from Penzance Business Network with alternative proposals for Penzance Harbour. As a coordinator of business and community groups supporting the current plans (on the eve of the Government's decision to fund the project) I feel impelled to communicate our concerns about this proposal.

## **Support for Option A (Current Scheme)**

You will have seen our previous representations to the Minister in support of current plans for Penzance Harbour. We have challenged the notion that the community in Penzance is "overwhelmingly against" the proposals. We demonstrated an impressive level of public support prior to the Cornwall Council planning meeting on 8 Mar 10 and support has grown since. The evidence we offer is:

- Nearly 800 letters of support to the Planning Department
- Our petition sheets with 2500 names of people supporting harbour plans. These can be viewed on Cornwall Council's website.
- Over 4000 people supporting our Facebook site ("A future for Penzance").
- Over 120 local businesses declaring support on our Facebook site.
- The support of the Penzance Chamber of Commerce and Penzance & District Tourism Association with a combined membership of over 220 members.

## **Penzance Business Network**

The membership of Penzance Business Network is not publically declared and it has been virtually invisible in Penzance since its public presentation of Option Pz on 3 Mar 10. Its membership is unknown but appears small. By contrast Penzance Chamber of Commerce has increased its membership since it started campaigning for Option A and it is active in promoting local business interests.

**True Friends of Penzance & Isles of Scilly** is an umbrella group for individuals and organizations supporting Penzance Harbour developments proposed under Option A.  
Communications/Secretary: Dick Cliffe [support@truefriend.org.uk](mailto:support@truefriend.org.uk) Tel: 01736 331734  
Spokesperson: Rebecca Farrington [spokesperson@truefriend.org.uk](mailto:spokesperson@truefriend.org.uk) Mob: 0777 999 8590

# True Friends of Penzance & Isles of Scilly

[www.truefriend.org.uk](http://www.truefriend.org.uk)

## Option Pz.

The main issues that many Penzance residents have with Option Pz are:

Timing & Credibility. Option Pz has been presented much too late to ever be implemented but it does 'muddy the water'. It is perceived a wrecking measure rather than a genuine attempt to provide a better solution with less opposition.

Waterside Meadery. Option Pz requires the knocking down of the Waterside Meadery, a highly popular and profitable family restaurant on the harbour side. Not only is there the issue of the cost of buying out the lease of this business but there is issue of the "Save the Waterside Meadery" Facebook campaign which has 2305 members. This campaign was sparked when Cornwall Council entertained the idea of using the site for ferry terminal facilities. There is therefore no prospect of Option Pz escaping objections on a very large scale by local people.

Lack of Public Support. The Option Pz public presentation on 3 Mar 10 was preceded by a half page advertisement in the local paper (Cornishman) and a leafleting campaign, both driven by the Friends of Penzance Harbour (objectors). Objectors were strongly encouraged to attend and support Option Pz. In the event the presentation was well attended but the response was muted barring a few choreographed declarations of delight. Option Pz has not caught the imagination of the public in Penzance. The revised plan with a freight area near the railway station will be overlooked by many properties in Penzance and is likely therefore to attract objections.

Original Freight Terminal Location. Option Pz originally proposed both a passenger terminal and freight building on the harbour front. This proposal trampled on the idea of opening up the harbour front to the public and meant large vehicles manoeuvring near a blind corner. All of the utilitarian freight clutter would be moved from North Pier to the harbour front and this was seen as a backward move by supporters of Option A.

Revised Freight Terminal Location. The presentation being made to the Department of Transport proposes a new and separate area for freight near the railway station. This site is remote from South Pier and has many of the disadvantages of Option C which proposed an out of town freight centre. The cost of additional staff and freight handling equipment increase freight costs significantly. Freight costs are a critical issue for Islanders.

Sea Defence of South Pier & Barbican. "Saving Battery Rocks Beach" has been a central objective of objectors. This relatively inaccessible area of shingle covered beach beneath the historic South Pier is an area especially exposed to the sea and overtopping in strong South Easterly winds. It is by far the most exposed and vulnerable part of Penzance with just a towering wall protecting the busy harbour road and Barbican from the sea. The proposed new sea wall deals with this longstanding sea defence problem as well as providing the space required (due to reclamation) for terminal facilities. In our opinion Option Pz skates over the issue of sea defences because rock armour is the logical alternative to a new wall and rock armour would cover most of Battery Rocks Beach. Such a solution would offend die hard objectors. Any plan for South Pier which does not make the South Pier (inner section) safer for the public and workers is not a credible plan. Photographs are attached that illustrate the problem (see annex).

Compromise of Regeneration Plans. The idea of reclaiming part of Battery Rocks Beach to both protect the Barbican and allow positioning of all ferry related activities next to South Pier (ferry berth) goes back to proposals made by architects YRM in 2004/5. Mr Bell, currently working with Penzance Business Network, will be familiar

**True Friends of Penzance & Isles of Scilly** is an umbrella group for individuals and organizations supporting Penzance Harbour developments proposed under Option A.  
Communications/Secretary: Dick Cliffe [support@truefriend.org.uk](mailto:support@truefriend.org.uk) Tel: 01736 331734  
Spokesperson: Rebecca Farrington [spokesperson@truefriend.org.uk](mailto:spokesperson@truefriend.org.uk) Mob: 0777 999 8590

# True Friends of Penzance & Isles of Scilly

[www.truefriend.org.uk](http://www.truefriend.org.uk)

with these plans as he was involved with producing them at the time. Keeping all of the ferry facilities close to South Pier frees up the rest of the harbour for regeneration. Putting the terminal on the harbour front immediately compromises this principle. Option Pz is a significant impediment to regeneration because of where it locates the passenger and freight terminal. The recent AECOM regeneration plan public consultation (see extract at annex) shows how easily Option A dovetails with proposals to open up the harbour front.

## Conclusion.

Option Pz is not a credible option and it would take several years to develop the proposal to the point where it was credible. Even then one would have to question public acceptance and the acceptance of current objectors who would be forced to accept some kind of sea defence measures on Battery Rocks Beach (probably rock armour). In the mean time the Scillonian would have to be extended in service and the Government find additional funding both to buy out the existing businesses affected by Option Pz and replace the EU funding which would be lost when deadlines were exceeded.

Yours faithfully,



RICHARD CLIFFE

Coordinator & Secretary

True Friends of Penzance & Isles of Scilly.

Annexes:

- A. Photographs illustrating sea defence problem.
- B. Extract from map of Penzance Harbour & Barbican Regeneration Proposals (AECOM).