

Cornwall welcomes Government funding for Penzance and St Mary's harbour improvements

13 August 2014

Cornwall Council has welcomed the news that the Government has agreed to provide more than £7m to support the proposed works at Penzance and St Mary's harbours.

The Secretary of State for Transport Patrick McLoughlin announced today that the Department for Transport was making £6.347m available for the harbour works at St Mary's, together with dredging and traffic management improvements for the harbour at Penzance.

The Department for Transport is also giving Cornwall Council a further £976,000 to cover the costs of preparatory works for the scheme. These costs would normally be met by the local authority.

Nigel Blackler, Head of Strategy, Economy, Enterprise and Environment at Cornwall Council, said **"The harbour improvements proposed at St Mary's and Penzance will help safeguard the future of the sea link by creating deeper water berths which will increase the range of vessels which could potentially provide the service in the future."**

Bert Biscoe, Cornwall Council's Cabinet Member for Transport and Waste, added **"We are always glad to welcome the Secretary of State to Cornwall. Transport is a very significant issue for us and having senior ministers who know it first hand is invaluable."**

Today's announcement, made during a two day visit by the Secretary of State to Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, means that the works to carry out dredging at Penzance and pier widening and improving freight handling facilities at St Mary's can go ahead as soon as the authorities receive formal confirmation of the Convergence funding. This decision is expected in the near future.

Cornwall Council has agreed to be the Accountable Body for the funding and will ensure the improvements at Penzance and St Mary's Harbours are delivered.

The scheme has been developed by a partnership including Cornwall Council, Council of the Isles of Scilly, Penzance Town Council, Duchy of Cornwall, Isles of Scilly Steamship Company and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership, with support from West Cornwall MP Andrew George.

Chris Pomfret, chairman of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership, said: **"Having a resilient transport link is vital to the islands' economy and for unlocking future growth. This project will have lasting benefits and we are pleased the Secretary of State has recognised the case we and our partners have been making for this crucial investment. We have also had the opportunity to raise wider transport issues during his visit to the region."**

Rob Goldsmith, chief executive of the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company, which operates passenger and freight services between Penzance and St Mary's, said: **"This is very welcome news. It will improve flexibility for our ship operations at both ends of the route and enhance the overall passenger experience, especially at St Mary's. Combined with ongoing investment at Land's End and St Mary's airports this further strengthens transport links to the islands."**

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