



House of Commons  
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Dear Sajid,

We have been in touch with your office previously regarding projects local to Plymouth that are seeking funding as part of Growth Deal 3. We are writing today to give you a more detailed and up-to-date brief on what are two vital long term strategic projects within the City of Plymouth. Both of these projects maintain a strong link with strategic government objectives and require essential central funding. The projects are:

- The regeneration of Plymouth Railway Station and;
- Oceans Enterprise Zone.

Plymouth will be the lead city for the International Mayflower 400 celebrations in 2020. As you will know, it is a series of events, projects and initiatives that will be delivered leading up to, during and post-2020. The regeneration of the city's train station, creating a 21<sup>st</sup> century gateway for the city, and the diversification of the city's economic base, building upon its Marine excellence are two major projects where support from central government will be required.

Plymouth Station is the 3<sup>rd</sup> busiest in the West of England with only Bristol Temple Meads and Bath Spa handling higher passenger numbers. There has been limited investment in the station since it was built in the 1960s and it is currently not fit for purpose as a "Gateway" to Plymouth and Cornwall, particularly with the predicted growth in passenger numbers over the next 10 years. Rail infrastructure also formed a key tenet of our campaign in Plymouth during the General Election last year. Investment has been lacking under governments of all colours for many years and there is significant local support for this to change.

Plymouth City Council has identified the station regeneration as one of its key priorities and has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Network Rail (NR), Great Western Railways (GWR) and the University of Plymouth. In addition, to underpin the MOU and as the two principal landowners, the Council have also entered into a Bi-Lateral Understanding with Network Rail to actively promote the station's regeneration.

The Council's £5m Growth Deal 3 funding application is critical to support gap funding requirements in order to lever in £50m private investment from the University. There is a window of opportunity to secure this inward investment. As well as enhancing this key gateway, the scheme will deliver 23,000m<sup>2</sup> (250,000ft<sup>2</sup>) mixed use redevelopment of the station including:

- New University of Plymouth academic facilities and offices;
- Significant additional Car Parking Spaces;
- New Bus and Taxi facilities;
- Improved public realm;
- Improved walking and cycling linkages with City Centre;
- Creation of 400 Construction Jobs;
- Release of £5m+ of Public Sector Assets

The Council are working closely with the Cabinet Office One Public Estate programme, GWR and NR to fund the early feasibility work on the station. In addition, given the significance of the station to Cornwall, Cornwall Council has agreed to contribute £0.5m LEP funding towards the first phase of regeneration. One of the criticisms that we feed back to Plymouth City Council from central government is their need to better coordinate with relevant stakeholders when putting forward funding bids. We would argue quite strongly that the relationships and work done so far on what is a complex project with potentially huge benefits for the city goes some way in addressing those criticisms.

The second project, Oceansgate Enterprise Zone, part of HM Devonport Dockyard, is the £72m flagship project of the Plymouth and SW Peninsula City Deal, which seeks to transform under-utilised land and buildings in Devonport Naval Base into a major marine hub, creating 25,000m<sup>2</sup> (270,000ft<sup>2</sup>) of business space; up to 1,200 jobs and act as a catalyst for the growth of the marine sector regionally and nationally.

We have already secured £7.8m for Phase 1 which will create 175 jobs. We are also seeking £2.7m of European Regional Development Funding funding to anchor a Marine Business Technology Centre in Phase 1 to provide marine businesses and research institutes opportunities to test and develop prototype devices in waters around Plymouth Sound. These unique facilities will be the first of their kind in the UK and will greatly improve our track record in bringing new products to market. Through the South Coast Marine Cluster, we are working with partners in Cornwall, Dorset and the Solent to ensure the Marine Business Technology Centre is effectively integrated into other innovation assets such as the Marine Autonomous Systems Centre in Southampton.

In order to maintain momentum, we are forging ahead with Phase 2 and are seeking £5m from Growth Deal 3 as part of a £10m investment in order to capitalise on opportunities provided by the Enterprise Zone designation. Phase 2 will create 1,237m<sup>2</sup> (13,500ft<sup>2</sup>) of light industrial units, 1,176m<sup>2</sup> (12,700ft<sup>2</sup>) of office development and will invest in essential utility services work associated with Phase 3, to help unlock the key waterfront area of Oceansgate including the three redundant dry docks, associated quays and jetties together with existing and proposed new buildings. In all this will create 650 jobs. This is a long term project for the city that will see Plymouth further make its mark upon marine industries both nationally and internationally. The companies in the city are cutting edge, but access to the water is at a premium. This project ultimately helps to unlock part of the waterfront for companies to develop their operations within the city and attract further investment and importantly more skilled jobs. The government has already invested in this site via the City Deal and Growth Deal 2. This is another project with the ability to open up new benefits for the city, but requires commitment from central government,

along with the other funding streams detailed above, to be achieved.

We know you will understand the importance of these two major interventions and the step change they will have in the future of the city. We would be delighted to show them to you first hand and are currently putting in place plans to tour the projects when you visit the city next month.

As per your suggestion, we will be following up with Andrew Percy MP in person, and we are seeking to brief you in Westminster at some point over the coming few weeks. Hopefully these opportunities will allow us to address any queries you may have.

We cannot underestimate the impact that these two projects would have on the city. Recently, one of the largest investment deals for up to a decade in the city was achieved, in part due to your work in your previous post. Plymouth's prospects as a city under Labour were not positive. However, as the city becomes less reliant on Devonport Dockyard for employment, it is key that we seek to develop infrastructure to continue to attract more of the kind of private sector investment deals that were concluded last week. That is why these projects hold such singular importance in the destiny of the city and why we believe that a Conservative government is the only kind that can deliver it.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Johnny Mercer MP

Gary Streeter MP