

JNAPC response to the consultation by Newport City Council on the Newport Medieval Ship submitted on Friday 24th January 2014.

https://services.newport.gov.uk/forms/form/425/en/budget_consultation_2014_2015

Question 3

46 CLL Newport Medieval Ship

We note that whilst Newport Council is committed to the completion of the conservation of the archaeological timbers from the Newport Medieval Ship it is allocating no funding to the project beyond this phase.

The Newport Ship is an internationally significant object, the best preserved and best documented 15th century ship in the world that is clear evidence of Newport's historic importance. It is also an object that has attracted extensive public interest and was initially saved as a result of a popular public campaign in 2002. Since then considerable public funds (c£8.5 million) have been spent on the ship. The decision to withdraw funding from the project with no plans in place to store, curate or display the ship will result in the destruction of an internationally significant archaeological object and the loss of c£8.5 million that has been spent on the ship to date. We believe that this is an unreasonable way to treat a very important part of the UK's maritime heritage.

Question 4

46 CLL Newport Medieval Ship

The Newport Ship is not a liability, but a potential source of income. At the point at which Newport Council plans to withdraw funding all of the investment in the object that will allow it to be understood and displayed will have been spent. A report from independent consultants has indicated that a new museum displaying the ship would attract up to 150,000 visitors to Newport a year and result in several additional millions of pounds being spent in the local economy.

Whilst it may not be possible to build such a museum in the current economic climate the act of withdrawing funding from the project at this stage will result in the destruction of the ship, the loss of the funds invested in the project to date and the loss of an opportunity for Newport to invest in a culturally unique object that has proven public appeal and which research has shown could help grow Newport's local economy.

We strongly recommend that Newport Council reconsiders its current proposal and makes plans to safeguard the future of the ship by curation and storage. This will be a low cost in the short term, estimated at circa 25% of the funds allocated to the project in 2015/16, and will mean that neither the public investment in the ship nor the potential to support Newport's economy in the future will be lost.