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MR BORIS JOHNSON  
DAILY MAIL  
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LONDON  
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19/06/23

**National Flagship**

*Dear Boris,*

Five important words within the Prime Minister's inaugural speech outside Number Ten were "Embrace the opportunities of Brexit".

Commissioning a National Flagship would be a high profile symbol of commitment.

You initiated this last year but the government recently cancelled procurement because of unavailability of public funds.

The enclosed letter to the Chancellor from my MP appears to be bearing fruit as shown in the Chris Hope article in April which I enclose. Other background information is also supplied.

I can visualise the ship hosting a trade mission to Mumbai for example. Floodlights, red carpet, Royal Marines band, the Indian President and perhaps William and Kate in attendance. All followed by a Sea Day in the morning.

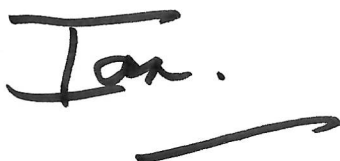
Media coverage would be the envy of the commercial world.

I believe funding for all or part of the build cost could be secured from respected British business chiefs who could expect reciprocal onboard advantage.

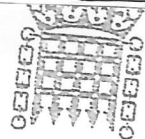
Private Sector Funding is the answer.

What do you think ?

With Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian." followed by a long, sweeping horizontal flourish.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
1 Horseguards Road  
London SW1A 2HQ

13 February 2023

Dear Jeremy,

Funding for a National Flagship

As I am sure you know well, after many years of debate and discussion, a commitment was given by the then Prime Minister to proceed with a National Flagship project. Nineteen bidders were selected for the Design Procurement Competition and these were being whittled down to three when the project was cancelled last year.

The unavailability of funding was said to be the reason for the cancellation and that is why I am writing to you now.

One of the most dedicated promoters of a National Flagship, throughout the entirety of my 25 years in Parliament so far, is my constituent Ian Maiden who for decades headed the famous billboard advertising company which bears his name. Indeed, I recall mentioning his vision in my maiden speech in 1997!

Mr Maiden believes that the design scheme he submitted progressed to the three finalists before last year's cancellation. The reason for writing is his belief that he can assemble a small syndicate of highly resourced senior members of the Royal Yacht Squadron - an organisation with a record of support for our country and its Navy stretching back for some 200 years.

The simple point at issue is whether the Government would be willing to reinstate the National Flagship project if Mr Maiden could assemble a syndicate to cover the capital cost of building this ship? Such an initiative would mean there would be no cost to the Exchequer until such time as the vessel entered service. On entry into service the National Flagship would then start to fulfil its role including the generation of a substantial income stream which would more than offset the running cost.



This seems to me to be a very generous offer which could firmly be founded on the basis of reliable contributions from some of the UK's most successful business chiefs. I do hope you will seriously explore the proposal and agree with me that it would be a great shame to "look the gift-horse in the mouth".

With all best wishes,

Yours ever,

*Julian*

*Sir Julian Lewis 17.12.81*



# Royal Yacht can be funded by private donors, says millionaire

By Christopher Hope  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

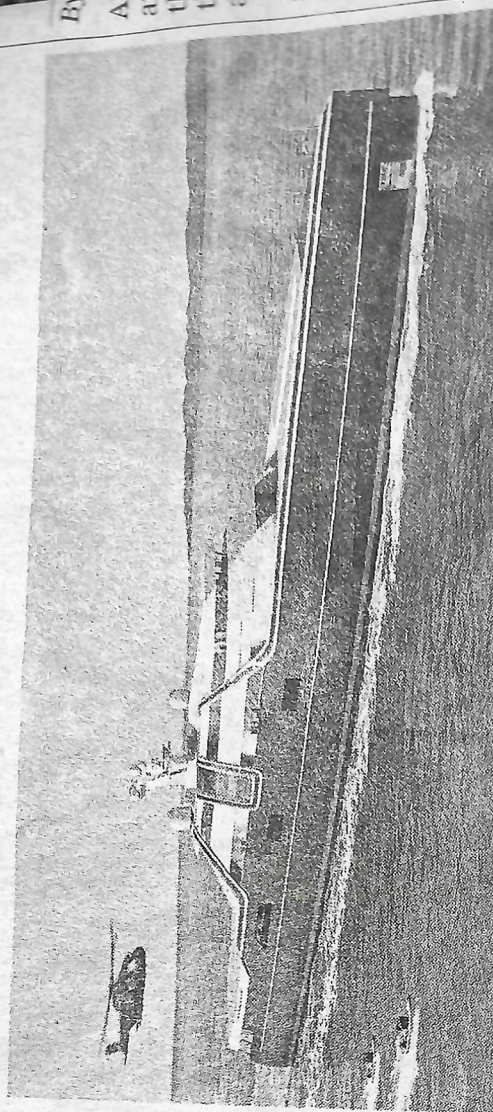
A £250 MILLION national flagship to replace HMV Britannia could be built with private backing after the Government's Department for Business and Trade gave tentative support for the idea, *The Daily Telegraph* can disclose.

The flagship project has been on hold since November, when the Ministry of Defence (MoD) diverted the funds to pay for two new military ships.

But Lord Johnson of Lainston, a minister at the Department for Business and Trade, said he would be open to the idea of a privately funded flagship.

The peer, who is the investment minister, told *The Telegraph*: "I am happy to encourage big ideas and ambitions that help sell the enormous benefits of trading with and investing in the UK."

He was responding to claims by Ian Maiden, a millionaire former advertising tycoon who has campaigned for a Britannia replacement for the past 25 years, that he could raise private funds for a new flagship if he could be certain of government support. Mr Maiden spent £420,000 developing one of four designs shortlisted by the MoD before the project was paused.



A proposed design for the £250 million HMV Britannia replacement, by Team Festival

Supporters point to how Britannia acted as a catalyst for billions of pounds worth of trade deals by hosting trade days around the globe before it was decommissioned in 1997.

Mr Maiden said: "If Kemi Badenoch's export predictions are right, resulting from the CPTPP [Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership] trade deal signed off last Friday with the Indo-Pacific trade bloc, the flagship trade platform could come into its own."

The other designs were by shipbuild-

ers Harland & Wolff, ship designer Houlder and OCEA UK, and are revealed in this month's *Boat International*.

*The Telegraph* has campaigned for a Britannia replacement since 2016. Jeremy Hunt, the Chancellor, has said he would like to see a replacement to help Britons feel "proud as a country".

An MoD spokesman said while "there are no current plans for a national flagship... the programme sought to showcase the extraordinary diversity and depth of UK maritime expertise, as was exemplified by the designs" entered.

APRIL 8, 2023

DATE/TELEGRAM