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Our Ref :ml/03/1126

Your Ref :Jubilee pontoon – Saltash Town Council

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This is to Certify that Mike Lyness

At the request of Saltash Town Council, a without-prejudice inspection was undertaken of the walkway bridge sections providing access to the tidal landing pontoon utilised for passenger embarkation and disembarkation. The structures are connected to the shore via the aforementioned walkways and are situated in Saltash, Cornwall, slightly to the north of the Tamar Bridge. The inspection was commissioned to assess the general condition of the structures and to evaluate the extent of corrosion following recent repairs to areas of material wastage within the primary walkway structure.

The inspection was carried out in situ, with access achieved both from the walkways themselves and from the waterside utilising a small vessel. This approach afforded reasonable external access to the accessible structural elements.

Protective coatings were not removed to permit ultrasonic spot thickness measurements. The exposed shell plating was subject to close visual examination for evidence of defects and was selectively and randomly hammer-tested to identify potential areas of weakness or delamination. Where considered necessary, additional localised surface preparation was undertaken to facilitate further ultrasonic spot thickness measurements. Furthermore, dye penetrant testing was selectively applied to accessible weld areas to assist in identifying any surface-breaking defects of structural significance.

GENERAL CONDITION REPORT

JUBILEE LANDING PONTOON – RIVER TAMAR, SALTASH

SUMMARY

This report provides a general condition assessment of the Jubilee Landing Pontoon and associated articulated access walkway located on the River Tamar at Saltash. The structure, owned and operated by Saltash Town Council, remains operational and continues to support ferry services between Saltash and Plymouth.

The inspection has identified that the pontoon and walkway are currently fit for purpose, with recent repair works—including welded overplating and modifications to articulated cover plates—providing adequate short to medium term integrity (12–24 months).

However, areas of significant corrosion remain, mainly partially hidden in some areas, particularly within mild steel box section members where internal corrosion is ongoing and may lead to future perforation beyond repaired zones. While current repairs mitigate immediate risks, they do not arrest underlying degradation mechanisms.

It is therefore recommended that the Council adopts a proactive asset management approach, including implementation of an annual inspection and maintenance regime and the allocation of future capital expenditure (CapEx) for phased refurbishment. Consideration should be given to replacement of critical structural elements with stainless steel to improve durability and reduce whole-life costs in the aggressive marine environment.

The structure is considered serviceable in the short term; however, forward planning is essential to ensure long-term operational resilience, safety, and cost efficiency.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents a general condition assessment of the Jubilee Landing Pontoon located on the River Tamar near Saltash, East Cornwall. The structure is owned and operated by Saltash Town Council and is utilised under agreement with various ferry operators to facilitate passenger access between Saltash and Plymouth, West Devon.

The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level overview of the current structural and operational condition of the pontoon, associated articulated access walkway, and supporting elements. The report also outlines recent repair works and provides recommendations for ongoing inspection and maintenance to ensure continued safe operation.

2. DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURE

2.1 Landing Pontoon

The Jubilee Landing Pontoon comprises a floating structure designed to accommodate varying tidal conditions of the River Tamar. The pontoon provides berthing and passenger transfer capability for local ferry services, as well as several berths for smaller vessels.

2.2 Access Walkway

Access to the pontoon is achieved via an articulated gangway system consisting of three primary sections. These sections are designed to accommodate tidal movement while maintaining safe pedestrian access.

2.3 Supporting Structure

The gangway is supported by a series of reinforced concrete pillars, providing structural stability and load transfer to the riverbed. The articulation between sections is achieved through mechanical joints designed to permit vertical and limited horizontal movement.

3. SCOPE OF INSPECTION

This general condition report is based on a visual inspection of accessible elements of the structure. The inspection includes:

- * Floating pontoon condition
- * Gangway structural elements
- * Articulation joints
- * Deck surfaces
- * Visible fixings and connections

No intrusive testing or underwater inspection has been undertaken as part of this report.

4. GENERAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT

4.1 Pontoon Structure

The pontoon remains operational and structurally adequate for its intended purpose. Surface wear consistent with marine exposure is evident, including minor corrosion of metallic components and weathering of decking materials. No immediate structural defects compromising safety were identified.

4.2 Articulated Walkway

The three-section articulated walkway is functioning as intended, allowing for tidal variation without restriction. Alignment between sections remains generally consistent, with no significant deformation observed.

However, it is noted that some of the repairs undertaken extend over areas of significant corrosion, particularly visible on the outer faces of the mild steel box section members. While these repairs are currently effective, there is evidence to suggest that internal corrosion within these sections persists. This internal degradation is likely to continue and may ultimately lead to perforation of the steel surfaces beyond the extent of the recent repair works.

4.3 Concrete Support Pillars

The exposed sections of the reinforced concrete support pillars appear to be in satisfactory condition based on a visual inspection only. Minor surface deterioration and marine growth are present but are typical for structures of this nature and environment.

It should be noted that this assessment is limited to visible areas above water level only. No intrusive investigation or below-water inspection has been undertaken. On this basis, the structure appears to be in good order; however, concealed defects or sub-surface deterioration cannot be ruled out.

4.4 Decking and Surface Finishes

Deck boards show signs of wear, including minor splitting, weathering, and localised softening. However, these conditions are not currently considered to present a significant hazard.

4.5 Fixings and Connections

Visible fixings and connection points exhibit varying degrees of corrosion. While most remain serviceable, some areas would benefit from cleaning, tightening, or replacement as part of routine maintenance.

5. RECENT REPAIRS

Various repair works have been undertaken across the pontoon and walkway structure. These include:

- * Tightening and replacement of selected fixings
- * Minor adjustments to articulation joints
- * Surface treatment to reduce corrosion in key areas – this is a relatively short term measure
- * Welded overplating to areas of identified steel section loss and corrosion
- * Modifications to articulated section cover plates to improve functionality and protection of moving components

These repairs are considered fit for purpose and sufficient to maintain safe operation in the short to medium term (approximately 12–36 months).

6. STRUCTURAL PERFORMANCE

Based on the inspection, the structure continues to perform its intended function without significant restriction. The articulation system remains effective in accommodating tidal variation, and the pontoon provides stable access for ferry operations.

However, the marine environment presents ongoing challenges, including corrosion, material degradation, and mechanical wear. These factors necessitate a proactive maintenance approach.

7. RISKS AND LIMITATIONS

- * Inspection limited to visible and accessible areas
- * No underwater or substructure assessment undertaken
- * No load testing carried out
- * Environmental conditions at time of inspection may influence observations

8. RECOMMENDATIONS – SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM

It is considered that the structure will remain serviceable for a period of 12–24 months, subject to routine maintenance and monitoring. Recommended actions include:

- * Continued monitoring of deck condition
- * Replacement of deteriorated boards as required
- * Periodic tightening and replacement of corroded fixings
- * Localised treatment of corrosion on metal components

9. ANNUAL INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

9.1 Overview

To ensure ongoing safety, reliability, and compliance, it is recommended that a formal annual inspection and maintenance programme be implemented.

9.2 Inspection Requirements

The annual inspection should include:

9.2.1 Structural Walkway Inspection

- * Detailed visual inspection of all gangway sections
- * Assessment of alignment and integrity
- * Identification of deformation, fatigue, or wear
- * Particular attention to previously repaired areas, including welded overplating

9.2.2 Articulated Joints

- * Full inspection of all articulation points
- * Disassembly where necessary for detailed examination
- * Cleaning, lubrication, and overhaul of mechanical components
- * Replacement of worn or defective parts
- * Inspection of modified cover plates for wear, distortion, and secure fixing

9.2.3 Fixings and Connections

- * Removal and inspection of critical fixings
- * Replacement of corroded or degraded components
- * Verification of torque and secure installation

9.2.4 Decking

- * Inspection of all deck boards for wear, splitting, or decay
- * Replacement of defective boards
- * Application of anti-slip treatments where necessary

9.2.5 Pontoon Structure

- * Inspection of flotation units (where accessible)
- * Assessment of overall stability and freeboard

9.2.6 Key Areas for Ongoing Monitoring

- * Areas of known corrosion, particularly within mild steel box sections
- * Locations where welded overplating has been undertaken
- * Articulated joint interfaces and bearing surfaces
- * Areas subject to frequent tidal submergence

9.3 Maintenance Actions

Following inspection, all identified defects should be addressed promptly. Maintenance actions may include:

- * Repair or replacement of structural components
- * Surface preparation and protective coating application
- * Mechanical servicing of moving components

9.4 Record Keeping

A formal record of inspections, findings, and maintenance works should be maintained. This should include:

- * Inspection dates
- * Observations and defect logs
- * Photographic records
- * Details of repairs undertaken

This will help with identifying the rate of further wasting

10. LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS

While current repairs are adequate in the short to medium term, consideration should be given to long-term refurbishment or replacement planning. This may include:

- * Structural assessment including underwater survey
- * Lifecycle cost analysis
- * Development of a phased replacement strategy for walkway sections

Given the observed corrosion within mild steel box section elements, it is recommended that budgeting provision be made for a more comprehensive refit of the walkway sections as a minimum requirement.

From a capital expenditure (Cap-Ex) perspective, the Authority should consider allocating funding within a 1–3 year horizon to address progressive deterioration. While short-term maintenance (Op-Ex) remains viable, continued reliance on reactive repairs is likely to result in increasing costs and operational disruption over time.

A planned investment approach would enable:

- * Improved cost certainty and budget control
- * Reduced unplanned downtime for ferry operations
- * Enhanced safety and asset longevity

In particular, consideration should be given to the replacement of lower structural sections

(especially those underfoot and most exposed to tidal influence) with stainless steel fabrication. Stainless steel components would provide significantly enhanced durability and whole-life cost benefits when compared to mild steel, even where hot dip galvanising has been applied.

Although initial capital costs for stainless steel fabrication are higher, lifecycle cost modelling typically demonstrates reduced maintenance expenditure, extended service life, and improved resilience in aggressive marine environments.

This recommendation is of particular importance due to the environmental conditions at the site, where the pontoon and associated structure are subject to periodic submergence in saline tidal waters. Such exposure accelerates corrosion processes in mild steel and reduces the effective lifespan of traditional protective coatings.

11. CONCLUSION

The Jubilee Landing Pontoon and associated articulated walkway remain operational and fit for purpose at the time of inspection. Recent repairs have addressed key issues and are expected to provide satisfactory performance for a period of 12–24 months.

However, due to the inherent challenges of the marine environment and the age of the structure, a structured annual inspection and maintenance programme is essential to ensure continued safe operation.

With appropriate maintenance and monitoring, the facility can continue to support ferry operations between Saltash and Plymouth effectively in the short to medium term.

12. BUDGETARY AND COST CONSIDERATIONS

At this stage, no detailed cost plan has been prepared; however, indicative considerations are as follows:

- * Ongoing reactive maintenance (short-term): Low to moderate annual expenditure
- * Planned refurbishment of walkway sections: Moderate capital expenditure
- * Full or partial Stainless steel replacement: Higher initial capital cost of the raw material with significantly reduced long-term maintenance liability

It is recommended that a detailed cost appraisal be undertaken, including contractor quotations and lifecycle costing, to support funding applications and financial planning, it could be worth considering any possible available grant funding for such a project.

13. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This report has been prepared for the sole use of the commissioning client, Saltash Town Council, for the purposes stated within.

- * The report is based on a visual inspection only and does not constitute a full structural survey
- * No liability is accepted for defects not visible at the time of inspection
- * This report should not be relied upon by third parties without prior written consent
- * Recommendations are provided in good faith based on observations at the time of inspection

14. CONDITIONS OF SURVEY

The inspection was undertaken under the following conditions:

- * Visual, non-intrusive inspection only
- * No dismantling of primary structural elements unless previously noted
- * No underwater or sub-surface investigation
- * Environmental and tidal conditions may have limited access to certain areas

Accordingly, the findings of this report should be considered in the context of these limitations.

REMARKS

1. This report is for the sole use of the commissioning client only and we are not legally liable to any future holder of the report.
2. This survey is carried out on the understanding that it does not constitute a full survey for design condition and does not take into account any undisclosed defects that may be revealed by more in depth studies which may have a bearing on the pontoons and there usability.
3. This report does not express or imply in any form any opinion regarding the original design, fitness for purpose, structural integrity or stability characteristics of the structure.

Signed
Primrose Marine Ltd

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