



Isle of Man
Government

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Council of Ministers
Working Group Report

Queens Pier, Ramsey
Options and Recommendations

December 2008

Price: £7.30

Chief Minister's Introduction

In 1993, a decision was taken by the Department of Highways, Ports and Properties, to mothball Queen's Pier for a limited period and save it for possible future refurbishment.

This situation still remains. Despite a number of Tynwald debates, and the production of numerous reports, the future of Queen's Pier remains undecided, and, whilst still standing, continues its progression of slow decay.

In 1995 the Pier became a registered structure under the Protected Buildings Register.

After fifteen years, Council of Ministers felt that it was time to decide the future of Queen's Pier. The Queen's Pier Working Group was therefore established to consider options for the pier, and clearly identify the views of the people of the Isle of Man on its future.

This report, presented to Council of Ministers by the Queen's Pier Working Group, is the result of those considerations. On behalf of the Council of Ministers I am pleased, therefore, to present to Tynwald, and the people of the Isle of Man, the findings of the Working Group, and the recommendations regarding those findings, made by Council of Ministers.

Therefore, the Council of Ministers recommends that the Report be received and that:

- (i) Council of Ministers establish a Steering Group to progress Options a) and b) as in Recommendation 1 of the Working Group's Report;
- (ii) Council of Ministers report back to Tynwald by no later than November 2009.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J A Brown', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval shape.

Hon J A Brown MHK
Chief Minister

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Background

In June 2006, the Tynwald Select Committee on Queens Pier, Ramsey, submitted its report with recommendations to Tynwald. Of the seven recommendations, only one was supported, "that the responsibility for maintenance remains with the Department of Transport until transfer of ownership to the Pier Company is confirmed". This motion thereby effectively maintained the status quo of the Pier and no decision regarding its future was made.

Following the debate and in recognition of the desire of Members to progress the matter, the then Chief Minister made a statement in Tynwald the following day that Council would report back to Tynwald on the Select Committee's recommendations in February 2007.

The Chief Minister announced in Tynwald in February 2007, that a Working Group would be established with a remit to review the options in respect of Queens Pier and make recommendations on its future use. The Working Group, established in February 2007, was also tasked to identify which, if any of the previous proposals deserve reconsideration, and oversee a consultation exercise involving members of the public and interested parties. The membership of the Group is:

Hon P.A. Gawne MHK (Chairman)

Mr C.G. Corkish MBE MHK

Mr T.M. Crookall MHK

Mr G.H. Waft MLC

Mr G.R. Gell

Mr J. Stokoe

Mr R. Tilleard

A copy of the terms of reference can be found at Appendix 1.

Introduction

This report will detail the consultation approach adopted by the Working Group, together with the options consulted upon. The report will then provide information regarding the viability of the economic development of the Pier.

As the heritage aspects of the Pier are clearly relevant to any discussion regarding its future, consideration will also be given to the value of the existing, and a re-furbished pier, together with a comparison of the options of heritage restoration or refurbishment with the limited use of modern materials.

Finally, the report will identify the available funding options and consider the future ownership of the Pier, together with conclusions and recommendations.

Research Assistance

Early in its deliberations, the Working Group recognised that independent, statistically valid research would provide important empirical evidence. Following a tender process, HLL Humberts Leisure was commissioned, working in conjunction with market research organisation BMG Research. Their brief was to review the previous reports, identify the views of the residents of the Isle of Man, and conduct market research and options appraisals.

The Working Group also engaged the services of Chartered Architect and Town Planner and Fellow of the Societies of Antiquaries of London, Mr A. Pass, to provide professional advice regarding the heritage value of the Pier.

Consultation

The consultation exercise was conducted in three phases – a postal survey, using market researchers BMG Research; a meeting with stakeholders; and a presentation to Tynwald members. Members were also given an opportunity to submit views to the Working Group.

(i) Postal Survey

The postal survey was conducted in late 2007, using 3000 randomly selected addresses. Sixty percent (60%) of the addresses were selected from Ramsey and forty percent (40%) from the rest of the Isle of Man. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached at Appendix 2.

The survey sought residents' views on four initial proposed options, as follows, for each of which background details and available costs were provided:

- Option 1. Do nothing
- Option 2. Demolish the Pier at a cost to the Government of £2m - £3m
- Option 3. Full heritage restoration at cost to the Government of between £7.24m and £17.8m
- Option 4. Refurbish the Pier with more modern materials at a cost to the Government of £3.6m to £4.5m

After being asked a number of questions about these four options, residents were made aware of a fifth option and asked to reconsider their responses in the context of this fifth option:

- Option 5. Commercial development with a sea-based marina between the harbour entrance and the Pier incorporating residential and commercial development on reclaimed land to provide private funding for the full heritage restoration of the Pier.

The survey received a response rate of 46%, with 1,365 questionnaires completed and returned for analysis. This is considered to be very high for a self-completion questionnaire, and could be considered an indication of a high level of interest in the future of Queens Pier.

The size of the sample achieves the maximum confidence possible in the survey results, and is therefore an accurate representation of the views of the residents of the Isle of Man.

There was no statistically significant difference in the responses received between gender, age, or whether respondents were from Ramsey or the rest of the Isle of Man. A full copy of the survey results is attached at Appendix 3.

(ii) Stakeholder Meeting

The findings of the postal survey were reported to a meeting of Government and public stakeholders in Ramsey on 21st January 2008. A full list of attendees is attached at Appendix 4.

Following a presentation of the findings, a discussion was chaired by the Chairman of the Working Group, when the stakeholders expressed their views. The stakeholders were not explicitly asked their views on the Options.

(iii) Views of Tynwald Political Members

A presentation to political members was made on 19th March 2008, attended by 15 political members in addition to members of the Working Group. Following the presentation all Tynwald Members were provided with a copy of the presentation and invited to submit their views. Twenty three members, excluding the members of the Working Group, submitted written views to the Working Group.

The Options:

Option 1 - Do Nothing

1. Background

In 1993, the Report of the Working Party on the Future of Queens Pier, produced by the Department of Highways, Ports and Properties, recommended mothballing the structure for a limited period, to safe-guard it from further deterioration and "save it" for possible future refurbishment. Although recommended for a limited period in 1993, this has remained the current position for the past 15 years. Pictures of the current condition of the Pier are attached at Appendix 5.

2. Cost

In the past Government has spent an average of £4,000 per year to make the Pier safe by either removing or securing in place anything which is in danger of falling.

These costs would increase over time due to the need to increase the frequency of safety checks and associated work. The future annual cost would most likely be about £10,000 per year.

3. Maintenance

See "Costs" above

4. Implications

The option to mothball was foreseen as a short to medium term option in 1993 to allow more consideration of options. The risk of continuing with this option is that the entire deck structure, including lamp posts, railings, seats, water main, joists and girders will continue to deteriorate and will either fall off or have to be removed before they fall. This will pose an ongoing risk to the public and an ongoing cost to Government.

Under this option, the risks to the public can only become more significant over time. As a consequence the costs to make the pier safe will continue to rise with no public benefit and a requirement to maintain a gradually deteriorating structure for a future decision.

5. Public Opinion

Only 3% of respondents to the postal survey favoured continuing the current option, to continue to mothball the structure and "do nothing."

The stakeholders were of the opinion that Government now needs to make a decision regarding the future of the Pier.

Political members gave no indication of a preference to continue to mothball the Pier.

Option 2 - Demolition

1. Background

As a registered structure under Manx legislation, Queens Pier is protected. Demolition of the pier would require de-registration of the structure.

2. Cost

Demolition of the Pier has been estimated at between £2 and £3 million. Any demolition proposal would require assessment to ensure that any remaining structure would not present a risk to the public.

3. Maintenance

There would be no maintenance costs were the Pier to be demolished.

4. Implications

De-registration for demolition would need to be a last resort and would require evidence that every other available option had been considered and deemed to be unviable.

5. Public Opinion

Only 6% of the respondents to the postal survey favoured demolition.

Whilst stakeholders were not specifically asked whether they were in favour of demolition, it was very clear that this was not an option they would favour.

Option 3 - Full Heritage Restoration

1. Background

This would restore the Pier to as close as practical to its original Victorian form using traditional materials and methods.

A full heritage restoration obviously ensures the greatest heritage value of the Pier is retained. In 2001, the options explored required the replacement of the lattice beams and the estimated 94,000 rivets which hold them in place with hand-forged rivets, in keeping with the Victorian methodology. A second, though lesser heritage option would be to replace the lattice beams and use stainless steel bolts to fix the structure.

2. Cost

Professional estimates for this work during the 2000s have varied from £7.24m, £8m, £9.5m to £17.8m

The recommended option in 2001, made by the Department of Transport in conjunction with Manx National Heritage, was estimated at £9,479,585.

3. Maintenance

This option would require repainting every five years and major structural and maintenance intervention after 25 years. The estimated average annual maintenance cost for this option in 2001 was £58,512 p.a. over a period of 50 years. This includes a major structural intervention during that period estimated at £1,320,000.

4. Implications

Restoration using this methodology would ensure that approximately 80% of the original structure would be conserved.

A full heritage restoration which maintains the historic integrity of the structure is the preferred route for Manx National Heritage and was confirmed to the Working Group in a letter from the Director dated 20th December 2007.

5. Public Opinion

A full heritage restoration was the choice of 18% of residents. 63% of those surveyed who were in favour of saving the Pier, were willing to spend up to £10 million on the pier, with a large minority putting no cap on the cost at all.

Option 4 - Refurbishment of the Pier using modern materials

1. Background

This option would require the limited use of modern materials and techniques to refurbish the Pier, in accordance with the proposals made by the Select Committee in 2006. The most significant difference between this option and a full heritage restoration is the replacement of the lattice steel structure with castellated beams.

2. Cost

In 2005, the cost of this refurbishment was estimated by the Morton Partnership and Mandall Engineering at between £3.6m and £4.5m.

The estimate provided in 2005 by Mr Brian Morton, MBE, for a refurbishment was in the region of £4m to £4.5m. To update these costs in June 2007, Mr Morton suggested these figures be upgraded by 7%. The estimated cost of refurbishment would therefore be between £4,280,000 and £4,815,000. It has been stressed, however, that more work is necessary to consolidate these cost estimates.

A sister company to Mandall Engineering which provided estimated costs for a refurbishment in 2005 but which has now ceased trading, Nutall John Martin, quoted a refurbishment cost in June 2008 of £4,976,83, excluding design costs.

3. Maintenance

Unlike the current structure, castellated beams have no connections within the beams themselves, thereby eliminating water penetration within the joints.

The type of paint used should have at least a 20 year guarantee. The refurbishment design should take advantage of the knowledge regarding the deterioration of piers by incorporating

deterioration solutions within the restoration. For example, the installation of an under-slung trolley system beneath the pier as part of the restoration process would allow maintenance works to be conducted without great difficulty.

The Morton Partnership has advised that maintenance costs for this option would be virtually negligible for the first ten years, with a need for patch painting and checking of the structure after 20 years. Mr Morton suggests that £40,000 be budgeted for this. He further suggests a major inspection and implementation of maintenance works in 60 years, for which, £300,000 (at current prices), should be budgeted. The maintenance costs for this option are therefore approximately £5,666.66 p.a., at current prices.

4. Implications

Restoration using this methodology would ensure that approximately 70% of the original structure would be conserved. Simplistically, the pier would appear as it is now, but the construction on the underside would be slightly different visually.

5. Public Opinion

Refurbishment with modern materials was the preferred option for almost half (48%) of respondents to the survey questionnaire in the early stages. After consideration of all five options, this remained the most popular, chosen by 28% of respondents.

Refurbishment was supported by the stakeholder group.

Of the Tynwald Members who were of the view that the Pier should be saved, refurbishment was the preferred option.

Option 5 - Marina Development

1. Background

A large, 24 hour access sea-based marina, lying between the harbour entrance and the Pier and including residential and commercial (hotels, restaurants) development on reclaimed land could pay for the full restoration of the Pier.

The number of planned marina development facilities in and around the North West of England highlights that there is currently a very limited capacity and a strong demand for berthing. Ramsey is ideally situated to capitalise on this growing trend, and the available information would appear to suggest there would be strong demand for berthing facilities in this location. Such a development could capitalise on the growth in marinas and harbours along the West Cumbrian coast, in particular, by offering visitor moorings for pleasure sailors on day trips or short breaks to the Isle of Man.

The Department of Transport is currently progressing a water retention scheme within the inner harbour at Ramsey, and it has been noted that both schemes could potentially become operational within the same timescale. The Director of Harbours has advised that should this be the case, there would be a market for both facilities.

2. Cost

The project would be funded privately, but Government would be required to contribute the land on a long lease basis. Further information regarding the funding is contained within Appendix 6.

3. Maintenance

There would be no maintenance cost to Government in this option, as maintenance would be funded by the Pier management company.

4. Implications

A marina development in Ramsey Bay would require considerable engineering incorporating the existing Pier and harbour wall, a sea wall defence and sea lock to create a protected marina, residential and recreational area. The bay would be dredged to ensure an adequate water depth for berthing. Full environmental impact assessments, to include social, economic, and landscape impacts, together with traffic assessments, would be an important element of the planning approval process.

Government would be required to lease to a marina development company the reclaimed land, and the only risk to Government would be if the developer failed to complete the development part-way through the project. At this point, Government would be required to intervene to "make good" the area.

In addition to funding the restoration and maintenance of the Pier, the development of a marina could potentially contribute to the regeneration of Ramsey and attract significant investment in the town. The additional benefits of investment and regeneration as a consequence of a marina development should therefore be fully recognised when considering the future options for Queens Pier.

5. Public Opinion

The postal survey indicated that there is strong support in principle (64% of respondents) for a marina development (with enabling residential and commercial development) if it could provide the necessary funding to pay for the full restoration of the pier. Restoration paid for by a marina development was the second most popular of the options, being chosen by 25% of respondents.

The stakeholders were of the opinion that whilst a marina should not be ruled out, the future restoration or refurbishment of the Pier should not be dependent upon the development of a marina.

Of the Tynwald Members who responded to the questionnaire, mixed views were expressed.

The elected Members for Ramsey expressed considerable concern that Ramsey residents were unaware of the implications of a marina within Ramsey Bay, and suggested that a further consultation exercise regarding the marina, including presentation of the proposed development plans, be conducted with the Ramsey residents.

Viability of Economic Development of the Pier

In addition to a marina and enabling development, the Working Group considered other commercial opportunities which may exist to generate additional revenue to support the business case for restoration and maintenance of the Pier. The small population of the Island, and Ramsey in particular, together with the relatively small number of tourists and the lack of land at the Pier entrance, provide little opportunity to attract commercial development to fund restoration of the Pier through a land-based or pier-based development.

Proposals considered and rejected on the grounds of commercial viability, including those made in previous reports, include:

- A Café/Restaurant (Queens Pier Working Group Report, 1998)
- Museum/Heritage Attraction (Queens Pier Working Group Report, 1998)
- An Aquarium (Queens Pier Working Group Report, 1998)
- Berthing for Cruise Ships
- Tourist Accommodation

Further information regarding the consideration of these proposals can be found in the report of HLL Humberts, attached at Appendix 7.

A further proposal was made, to site an electricity generating wind turbine on a concrete platform off the far end of pier.

It was proposed that this would generate power in an exposed location away from buildings, trees etc and convey this power back to shore to feed into the MEA Grid, earning money from power sales.

This proposal was not substantiated by either sufficient background information or a viable business case, and was therefore not supported by the Working Group at this time.

The Working Group therefore concluded that, other than a marina with enabling development, no development of the Pier would be economically viable.

Queen's Pier as a Heritage Attraction

For the individuals who responded to the public consultation, the most important factor when considering the future of the Pier was retaining the Island's heritage and history.

National market trends indicate that heritage attractions appear to be most popular amongst adults aged 35 plus. As almost half the Island's population is over 45, this statistic would appear to support the survey findings that the residents of the Isle of Man would like the Pier to be refurbished.

In addition, in 2006, more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Island's 300,000 visitors were aged 35 and above. The age profile of both residents and visitors therefore suggest a potential market demand to visit the Pier. A further indication of this potential demand could be evidenced by the total visitor numbers for Manx National Heritage sites, which in 2005/6 Financial Year were 211,286, which represents 55% of the total resident, and visiting, population.

The heritage value and history of the Pier is therefore a clearly relevant consideration in any discussions regarding its future.

Heritage Value of the Pier in relation to comparison with other Heritage Assets of the Island

For the purposes of this report, Queen's Pier has been compared with other historical sites and buildings in terms of significance, rarity, quality and potential. A numerical scoring method was rejected as too mechanistic and potentially misleading, as direct comparisons were almost

impossible to make. Instead, the heritage assets were considered in context. A full copy of the report produced by heritage expert Mr A. Pass, is attached at Appendix 8.

Queens Pier probably qualifies in the top 20 piers in the world, and is the Island's largest piece of civil engineering – being as long as Snaefell is tall. It has "group value" as part of the Island's Victorian experience, along with the other Manx icons such as the Manx Electric Railway, the Isle of Man Railway, the Gaiety Theatre and the Camera Obscura. With its dramatic location, age and appearance, it is impossible to consider Queen's Pier as anything other than a Manx heritage icon.

Mr Pass concluded that in heritage terms, Queen's Pier occupies a place closest in rank to the Gaiety Theatre and the Camera Obscura.

When considering comparisons of heritage assets, it is important to note that preservation values change over time. For example, Laxey Wheel was little valued up to mid 20th Century, but since 1970 has become a national treasure and second only to Tynwald Hill as a national icon.

Heritage Value of the Existing Pier

The seaside piers of the British Isles are, almost without exception, a definitive building type of the period 1814-1914 and therefore creations of the 19th Century. From an engineering perspective, piers were the forefront of Victorian civil engineering, to compare with bridge and harbour building of the period.

More than almost any other type of building, piers symbolised the diversity and innovation of the Victorian period. They were a complex building type, unknown before the 19th century; they employed many of the leading edge aspects of technology and embodied the confidence of an age which introduced new and daring attractions.

Of the ninety or so piers that were built after 1814, about half have survived into the 21st Century and most have been radically altered, enhanced, or in some cases spoiled. The significant heritage attributes of Queen's Pier are as follows:

- At 2,150 feet, it is the sixth longest in the British Isles.
- It is unusual, but not unique, in that it was designed primarily as a landing structure.
- The problem of moving heavy luggage to and from the steamers was resolved with the construction of a tramway from the entrance to the landing head. Similar railways or tramways exist only on Southend, Southport and Blackpool North Piers, and hence this is a rare and unusual feature.
- The Pier was built by Head & Wrightson of Stockton-on-Tees, builders of at least ten structures. Of their considerable output, only Eastbourne and Ramsey survive in anything like their original form today. Of the two, Ramsey has changed the least since it opened.

More than thirty of the surviving piers of England and Wales have been designated as listed for their architectural or historic interest, despite the fact that most of them have undergone radical alterations. Based on the criteria for listing presently applied in England and Wales, it is likely that Ramsey Pier would qualify for Grade 2 listed protection. The justification is that the Pier belongs to the heyday of Victorian pier construction, it is one of the finest works of distinguished engineers and it remains largely unaltered, compared with many other examples. Queens Pier has been recognised under Manx legislation as a structure of special architectural or historical interest.

Restoration versus Refurbishment

Cost

The most recent estimate received for a heritage restoration of the Pier, was in 2001, at a cost of £9,479,585, with an annual maintenance cost of £58,512 p.a. As the RPI increase since July 2001 is 31.4%, a more realistic current restoration figure would therefore be in the region of £12,456,174.

As the cost of refurbishment with the limited use of modern materials has been estimated at between £4,280,000 and £4,815,000, a full heritage restoration would be a minimum of £8,176,174 more expensive compared to restoration with the limited use of modern materials.

In addition, the maintenance costs for the heritage restoration are £52,000 p.a. higher than maintenance costs for refurbishment.

Registered Status

In consideration of the impact of a restoration with modern materials upon the registered status of the Pier, the Planning Department has previously stated that it would consider any proposals for refurbishment against the state of the structure and its inherent character and value, and the extent to which the works retain the original character and appearance. If it were not possible to replicate the existing structure, and there was a requirement to change the structure, this would be evaluated accordingly.

Heritage Value

A heritage conservation would result in an additional 10% of the original pier being conserved when compared with a restoration using modern materials.

Visual Impact

As previous reports have already demonstrated, the legs of the Pier are in relatively good condition. The inter-tidal area requires limited attention, but the areas in most need of attention are the steel sub-structure of lattice beams under the decking and the decking itself, which is also in need of substantial replacement.

Refurbishment with modern materials would, in general, retain the visual appearance and character of the Pier from the positions of both being on the Pier itself and the promenade, and not significantly detract from the existing Pier.

Piers Society View

The Piers Society has indicated that whilst it is a heritage based group, it is also very mindful of ensuring that once restored or rejuvenated, a pier is able to support itself financially. It would therefore welcome the restoration of the Pier in its entirety with some architectural enclosures and modern uses providing the attraction and funds to sustain it.

Health & Safety

It should be noted that regardless of any refurbishment method adopted, a refurbished pier would be required to conform to modern health and safety standards, which may well require changes to the railings, which could add fairly substantial additional cost, and would alter the heritage integrity of the Pier.

Public Opinion

In the postal survey, those in favour of saving the pier were marginally more in favour of the cheaper option of refurbishment using modern materials compared to the more expensive option of a full heritage restoration.

However, a clear majority of residents are in favour of saving the pier, which was the initial response of 81% of respondents to the postal survey. After consideration of all funding issues this remained at 72% and after consideration of the marina option, at 71%.

Of the political members who responded to the invitation to submit their views, restoration of Queen's Pier was not considered to be a high priority for 10 out of the 24 members who submitted their views.

Having given consideration to both the cost and heritage implications of the heritage restoration and the refurbishment with modern materials, should public funds be allocated for Queen's Pier, the Working Group supports a refurbishment using modern materials.

Funding Options

Funding of Refurbishment

A number of options to fund the refurbishment were considered as follows:

(i) Heritage Lottery Funding

The Working Group identified that applications from the Isle of Man are eligible for consideration for heritage lottery funding, although an application would be more favourably received from a charitable body, rather than a Government Department. It was further identified that a successful application for funding would require that the criteria of UK national significance be met.

Although of national significance in the Isle of Man, Queens Pier would not be considered to be of national significance in the UK. It has been identified, however, that restoration of the tramway, using the original locomotive, the "Planet", could possibly elevate the significance status of the Pier. It is suggested that further explorations regarding this route be made, but that application to the Heritage Lottery Fund be rejected as a viable funding option for refurbishment of the Pier at this time.

ii) Visitor Facility Improvement Fund

The Visitor Facility Improvement Fund enables the Department of Tourism and Leisure to support a range of amenities in respect of development activities. Typical projects eligible for funding are those which improve facilities to satisfy the needs of visitors, maintain or enhance the destination and environment.

The level of assistance does not ordinarily exceed 25% of the eligible works (exclusive of Value Added Tax), the maximum grant payable being £1,000,000.

Application to the Visitor Facility Improvement Fund is not available to a Government Department. Application for funding from this source was therefore rejected as a viable funding option for refurbishment of the Pier at this time.

(iii) Funding as part of a Marina Development

The development of a marina, supported financially by commercial development on reclaimed land, could provide government with the opportunity to require enabling conditions of funding the cost of restoration of Queen's Pier. Additionally, the construction of a lock facility in the bay to provide 24 hour access to the marina could enable the seawater in the bay to be drained, thereby creating easy access to the restoration works.

Whilst this option could be considered at no cost to Government, it would require Government to lease the area around the Harbour Wall on a long term basis, at a value yet to be determined.

(iv) Funding by Government

Government could fund the refurbishment of the Pier through a number of routes:

Government Reserves.

There is approximately £360 million currently in Government's Reserve Fund, which could be used to fund the refurbishment of the Pier.

Use of the Reserve Fund for this purpose would not be considered good practice and could create a precedent for future capital schemes. It is therefore considered unlikely that Treasury or Tynwald would support this course of action.

Capital

The Government Capital Programme is currently approximately £75 million per annum, for investment in the Island's infrastructure.

Business cases for inclusion within the capital programme are considered by Treasury, and the programme prioritised by Council of Ministers prior to approval by Tynwald in the form of the Isle of Man budget. A business case for the refurbishment of the Pier has never been submitted; consequently it is not currently within the Capital Programme.

A proportion of the refurbishment cost could be met by utilising the sum of £1,740,000 budgeted for the demolition of Queens Pier, for consideration to commence beyond 2009-10.

Implications of Funding of Refurbishment by Government

Refurbishment of Queen's Pier would need to be funded from the capital programme. The Capital Programme is a five year budget projection. Any decision to prioritise the refurbishment of Queen's Pier would likely require the deferment of another scheme within the capital programme, to balance Government spending.

The estimated costs to Government of refurbishment from the Capital Programme and comprising capital repayments and loan charges based upon refurbishment costs of £5,000,000 is £409,400 p.a, reducing by £6,300 per annum, for 50 years.

The estimated cost to Government of refurbishment from the Capital Programme and comprising capital repayments and loan charges, based upon refurbishment costs of £10,000,000 is £818,000 p.a, reducing by £12,000 p.a., for 50 years.

Funding Of Maintenance

Under the marina option, the Pier and maintenance of the Pier would be the responsibility of the marina operation company, and would be funded by that organisation.

Should Government agree to fund the restoration of the Pier, the annual estimated maintenance costs after refurbishment would need to be allocated annually within the revenue budget.

Future ownership of Queen's Pier

The current owner of Queens Pier, the Department of Transport, has been clear that as the Pier no longer serves its original function as a docking facility, its ownership no longer fits within the Department's remit of responsibilities.

Another suggested owner for Queens Pier has been Manx National Heritage. Manx National Heritage has, in the past, argued that ownership of the Pier would only be appropriate should the Pier be refurbished to conservation standards. As this refurbishment method is not financially viable, it is suggested that Manx National Heritage is not the appropriate future owner for Queen's Pier.

The Working Group also considered ownership by the Department of Tourism and Leisure. Following a request from the Working Group, the Department of Tourism and Leisure advised that it did not believe responsibility for the ongoing management of the refurbished Pier should rest with the Department, and suggested that a more appropriate agency might be either Manx National Heritage or the Victorian Society, both of which have the relevant experience of managing historical assets.

A further suggestion, made by the Select Committee in 2006, was that a charitable limited company be formed to take ownership of the Pier. The charitable company would comprise a political Chair, together with representatives from the following: Treasury, Ramsey Town Commissioners, Friends of Queens Pier, and the business community.

The Working Group considers this to be a viable option, and recommends the establishment of such a charitable company. Should this be approved, the Working Group is of the view that a Steering Group would be required, to include a representative from the Attorney General's Chambers, to conduct investigations into a number of issues prior to transfer of ownership to a charitable company. Those issues include: clarification of the nature of the charitable vehicle, ownership of the charitable vehicle; the identification of individuals willing to establish and manage such a charity; liability for the pier structure; the extent of the requirement for compliance with financial regulations and capital procedures, and potential future liquidation of the company. Members of the Working Group are willing to continue to participate, if so required, in the Steering Group.

The Working Group gave consideration as to whether ownership of the Pier should be transferred to a charitable pier company prior to refurbishment. The benefit of this would be that applications could be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the Visitor Facility Improvement Fund, for a contribution towards refurbishment costs, with the remainder funded by Government.

However, the Working Group recognised two major obstacles to this approach as follows:

- a considerable amount of Government funds would be provided to a third party, with no direct Government control regarding how those funds were utilised, and
- the charitable organisation would be responsible for the development and management of the refurbishment scheme, which would require both a considerable resource requirement, and a very specific set of technical skills and knowledge.

Conclusions

Queens Pier has a significant national heritage value both in its own right, and as part of the Group Value with other remaining Victorian structures such as the Manx Electric Railway and the Gaiety Theatre.

Yet, unlike those other survivors of the Victorian era, Queen's Pier has been allowed to decay, and the numerous debates regarding investment in its future have reached no conclusion. The Queens Pier Working Group believes that Government is now faced with three options:

1. To refurbish Queen's Pier as part of the development of a marina in Ramsey Bay, using private funding;
2. To refurbish Queen's Pier, with the limited use of modern materials and methods, using Government funds;
3. To demolish Queen's Pier.

Both options 1 and 2 are favoured by the Working Group as being of merit.

One of the areas of contention of those previous debates was the issue of heritage restoration versus the considerably cheaper option of refurbishment with modern materials. The Working Group is of the view that a modern refurbishment is the more viable and most appropriate of the two methods.

Furthermore, there is now conclusive evidence that the people of the Isle of Man are unequivocal in their wish that the Pier be refurbished or restored, despite the costs involved. However as evidenced by the current condition of the Pier, a decision is now required if there is to be any hope of saving the pier for future generations.

The restoration of the Pier, with funding from a marina development, has a lot of appeal, not least because it will not involve any Government funding, but also in view of the undoubted economic development benefits to Ramsey and the Island as a whole. Government could pursue discussions with a marina developer, to see how quickly this proposal can be brought forward. This would identify the level of supporting residential and commercial development necessary to cover the capital cost of a marina scheme and refurbishment of the Pier. Clarification could then be sought as to whether the amount of development required would be acceptable in planning terms. Thereafter, the Government would need to identify whether there is commercial funding support for such proposals.

In the meantime, work on the marina proposal should not be allowed to delay the refurbishment of the Pier, which should carry on with its own programme. It is therefore recommended that refurbishment funded by Government is also progressed as quickly as possible, to avoid any further escalation of costs.

The Working Group is therefore of the view that both refurbishment options –funded by a marina development, and funded by Government, should be pursued in tandem.

Given the concerns identified regarding project management of the refurbishment scheme, the Working Group concluded that to ensure value for money, a Department of Government be tasked to manage the refurbishment in accordance with Capital Procedures and Financial Regulations.

The Working Group also concluded that an appropriate charitable vehicle should be established to take ownership of Queen’s Pier, upon completion of the refurbishment, on terms and conditions to be recommended by a Steering Group appointed by Council.

Recommendations

1. that Queen’s Pier is of national heritage significance and should be refurbished;

(Option a)

a marina in Ramsey Bay with enabling commercial and residential development, on the condition that any developer complete the refurbishment of Queen’s Pier prior to the completion of the enabling residential/commercial developments;

(Option b)

refurbishment of Queens Pier using modern materials, funded by Government.

2. that either refurbishment in conjunction with a marina development (Option a), or refurbishment by Government (Option b), be commenced as a matter of urgency, dependent upon the earliest available of the options.

To progress Options (a) and (b), the following actions are required;

- (i) Council establish a Steering Group to progress Options (a) and (b)
 - (ii) Council determine a Department to design a scheme for the refurbishment of the Pier using modern materials and methods and seek financial approval from Tynwald for £5,000,000, to be allocated within the 2010/11 capital programme;
 - (iii) a charitable company (or other charitable vehicle, as considered appropriate), be established to take ownership of Queens Pier;
 - (iv) the Steering Group to recommend to Council the appropriate charitable vehicle and terms and conditions for the transfer of ownership of Queen’s Pier to the charitable company;
 - (v) a decision to be taken by December 2009 based upon on the progress of both options to date, to progress Option (a) or Option (b).
3. that should refurbishment by either Option (a) or Option (b) not be approved or eventually not be implemented, that the Pier be demolished.

Recommendations		Necessary Actions
Recommendation 1.	that Queen's Pier is of national heritage significance and should be refurbished	
Option (a)	Proposal: a marina in Ramsey Bay with enabling commercial and residential development, on the condition that any developer complete the refurbishment of Queen's Pier prior to the completion of the enabling residential/commercial developments	Steering Group established by Council to progress marina in Ramsey Bay with enabling commercial and residential development and refurbishment of Queen's Pier.
Option (b)	Proposal: that in parallel with Option (a), refurbishment of Queens Pier using modern materials, funded by Government;	Steering Group established by Council A Department determined by Council to design a scheme for the refurbishment of the Pier using modern materials and methods and seek financial approval from Tynwald for £5,000,000, to be allocated within the 2010/11 capital programme; a charitable company (or other charitable vehicle, as considered appropriate), be established to take ownership of Queens Pier; the Steering Group to recommend to Council the appropriate charitable vehicle and terms and conditions for the transfer of ownership of Queen's Pier to the charitable company;
Recommendation 2	that either refurbishment in conjunction with a marina development (Option a), or refurbishment by Government (Option b), be commenced as a matter of urgency, dependent upon the earliest available of the options.	Steering Group progress Options (a) and (b) A decision taken by Council by December 2009, based upon on the status of both options to date, to progress Option (a) or Option (b).

Recommendation 3	that should refurbishment by either (Option a) or (Option b) not be approved or eventually not be implemented, that the Pier be demolished.	
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