

Mount Batten Pontoon Budget Uplift

Briefing Paper Part I



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Mount Batten pontoon project has expanded from the original concept (meeting the needs to the Mount Batten Water Sports and Activity Centre) to include provision for the public Mount Batten Ferry and repairs to the bridgehead or sea wall.
3. The Mount Batten Centre pontoon and bridgehead works meet the following requirements:
 - 3.1 Replacement of the Mount Batten Water and Activity Centre pontoon as part of the National Lottery Heritage Funded Plymouth Sound National Marine Park (PSNMP)
4. Replacement of the Mount Batten Ferry landing stage. The previous landing stage and bridge were condemned and operations moved to the Mount Batten Centre existing pontoon. The new facility will meet both requirements.
 - 4.1.1. Bridgehead repairs. The bridgehead that supports the bridge to the Mount Batten pontoon has been identified as needing repair and strengthening works, at the request of FM these works have been incorporated into this project.
- 1.3 The three elements were incorporated within the tender for the pontoon replacement works.
- 1.4 The total pontoon project is £4,221,963. The PSNMP budget made up of The National Lottery Heritage Fund and UK government grants is £1.7m leaving a £2.5m budget uplift. The uplift is required to meet the new requirements of the project (bridgehead repairs and public ferry), and to meet increased construction costs identified due to results of surveys and seabed investigations. The uplift has been met from Facilities Management; Corporate Estate Fund, Health and Safety Fund and Corporate Borrowing.

5. PROJECT PREPARATION AND BUSINESS CASE

- 5.1. This budget uplift covers the replacement of the Mount Batten Water Sports and Activity Centre pontoon, provision for the Mount Batten ferry to operate and essential repairs to the bridgehead where the connecting bridge comes ashore. The works compliment the refurbishment of the Mount Batten Water Sports and Activity Centre, public realm and Mount Batten Tower (amenities) already underway.
- 5.2. The pontoon project scope was originally to replace the pontoon only for a wider more accessible pontoon deck to enable the Mount Batten Centre to provide better access to the activities for those with additional needs and ensuring more people could engage with the heritage of Plymouth Sound as part of the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park.
- 5.3. The project appointed technical advisors (Cattewater Harbour Commissioners) to support the development of the project. With their guidance, extensive investigations works were undertaken to help de-risk the project; these include wave report, UXO investigations and substantial seabed investigation including rock testing and boreholes. The results of these investigations were that the seabed was identified as limestone rock rather than mud, which has resulted in piling requirement to rock socket all piles, which is the most expensive type of piling. The investigations also identified wave heights could be higher than expected in extreme weather conditions, even with the shelter position of the pontoon and therefore this has resulted in the need for a heavier duty pontoon design.

- 5.4.** Within the design process options for additional commercial berths (8 in total) have been considered to provide ongoing revenue income to offset the maintenance and operational cost associated with the pontoon.
- 5.5.** In Jan 2024 following the failure of the PCC Mount Batten Landing Stage Bridge, the PSNMP project team was expanded to cover the Ferry operation. The project objective was now to provide a single pontoon landing stage to the Mount Batten peninsula.
- 5.6.** This option was then presented to the Mount Batten Centre Board who also agreed in principle to the proposal subject to design and final agreements. The MBP project team have been developing the project since this time based on these decisions, this has resulted in a wider scope for the investigation works thus creating additional cost to the project to date.
- 5.7.** In April 2024 the project team were advised by our technical advisors Cattewater Harbour Commissioners (CHC) that during investigations cracks had been identified in the bridgehead. The bridgehead forms part of the PCC estate. Facilities Management contractors carried out extensive investigations. With agreement from Facilities Management and in order to coordinate all works and prevent project delay the bridgehead was included in the overall project and put to competitive tender.
- 5.8.** The overall project was the subject of open competitive tender covering construction, professional fees, surveys and contingency.
- 5.9.** The results of the tender process and budget were the subject of a Business Case approved by CPOG (14th August) and CPB (17th September 2025).