Highways, Transportation & Waste
Drainage & Structures

Faversham Creek Swing Bridge

Kent County Council and various stakeholders in the Faversham Area have an ambition to restore the Faversham Swing Bridge, lock gates and dredge the basin to restore the basin to its former glory and to unlock future development and economic of the area. This would allow boat owners to moor in the regenerated basin, enjoy the town and in addition, be a valuable tourist attraction. The community formed a steering group incorporating the already established Faversham Creek Trust.

KCC are working with the harbour authority, Port of Sheerness, to seek a solution to realise the ambitions of restoring the bridge allowing it to open and function as a swing bridge. Currently the bridge is inoperable and is the subject of regular monitoring as a number of defects have been identified. The structure is managed by KCC as a sub-standard structure in accordance with BD 79/13.

The existing bridge is a two-span structure carrying Bridge Road over Faversham Creek in Faversham, Kent. It was originally constructed in 1881 to replace a sliding footbridge. The superstructure of the bridge was strengthened in 1941 and replaced again in 1976.
Structural assessment of the bridge, carried out in 1993 and 2012, determined that the superstructure does not have the capacity to support dead and superimposed dead loads when in the open position. It was also noted in the 2012 assessment report that; further loss of section to critical main steel members had occurred, however this had not reduced the capability of the bridge to carry current highway loading and a weight restriction was not required at this time.
With the cessation of commercial water borne traffic and the assessment result, it is understood that the bridge has not been opened to boats since the late 1980's/early 1990's.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of lifting the bridge deck off was to carry out a detailed inspection of the bridge deck superstructure whilst it is removed from its permanent position and removed to an adjacent temporary location where it will be placed upon temporary supports. A detailed report covering the condition of the bridge will then be prepared together with technical report providing advice on the future use of the bridge superstructure.

The recommendation was not to install the bridge deck due top the condition of the bridge and abutments, therefore a decision was made to install a temporary bridge for up to 1 year.

Most of the main structural members of the bridge require repair and/or strengthening to enable the bridge superstructure to be returned to operational use. The amount of work would be extensive and due to the form of construction would take a considerable time to undertake.

The cost for carrying out strengthening and repair would not be insignificant, it is considered that the cost would be in a similar region to that of providing a new structure which would provide an enhanced facility, greater life expectancy, greater durability and more reliability.

A new deck superstructure could also be designed to allow the bridge to open for river traffic albeit that the mechanical and electrical elements would need to be replaced before this could be reinstated.

Considering the above, it is likely that repair of the existing bridge deck superstructure would be less cost effective than providing a new structure and over the full life cycle