

Topsham Lock

The following delegated decision was taken by the Interim Director Public Realm in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Place.

Recent inspection by Devon County Council engineers of the temporary piling solution to shore up the disused Topsham Lock has indicated the potential for failure is high.

Poor alignment, displacement, heavy corrosion and buckling within the structure have been reported as a serious cause for alarm.

The advice is to commission a satisfactory scheme in the very near future to prevent a failure. Such a failure would drain the Exeter Ship Canal between turf Lock and Double Locks causing serious issues in the estuary and having a serious environmental impact. In addition the loss of water from the canal would effectively trap vessels moored in the Basin, prevent navigational passage along the canal which ECC has a statutory obligation to provide and compromise the integrity of canal banks.

A Delegated Powers form has been raised to request an initial £100K for further inspection and remedial works to begin. These inspections will allow officers to better understand the scale of the problem and present members with a clearer picture in terms of potential options to resolve the situation.

These range include a further improved temporary repair, a permanent solution or the refurbishment and reinstatement of a working lock.

A report to October Committee will follow in due course once more details in terms of options and costs are known.

The following Councillors and Officers were consulted:-

The Leader, the Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director of Place, Chair of Place Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Finance Officer.