

Ferguson Marine Trade Union Representatives submission of 30 January 2024

PE2029/L: Nationalise Clydeport to bring the ports and harbours on the river Clyde into public ownership

The Ferguson Marine Shop Stewards are writing in support of the petition submitted by the Campaign to Save Inchgreen Dry Dock.

Having been involved for many years in the fight to retain commercial shipbuilding on the lower Clyde, we feel there is a stranglehold on our national asset, Inchgreen Dry Dock, that is detrimental and hindering our fight to retain shipbuilding and the employment benefits it brings to our Inverclyde community. We believe that Clydeport/Peel Ports are protecting their industrial assets on Merseyside, Tyneside, Teesside and Falmouth at the expense of developing their marine facilities on the Clyde, particularly Inchgreen Dry Dock. This anti-competitive practice has prevented the retention and any prospect of future development of Inverclyde's marine industry were Inchgreen Dry Dock to become fully operational. It also constrains future opportunities to develop Ferguson Marine as we have no dry dock facilities, and we are at the mercy of the busy timetable of Dales Marine Ltd.'s Greenock dry dock. We agree with the campaign vision that Ferguson Marine should link up with Inchgreen as that would open opportunities to enter other markets for ship repair and servicing.

Currently Ferguson Marine is constrained by the length of our slipways with no land to expand, which prevents any bidding for larger ships and projects, such as offshore windfarm manufacturing etc.

Having attended open meetings with Clydeport/Peel Port and the Inchgreen Campaign, it's evident that the much publicised, but ultimately non-existent, Atlas de-commissioning contract exposes Peel Port's delaying tactics and their apparent intention of never exposing their southern assets to any serious competition from here in Inverclyde. Future opportunities for our shipyard to develop, expand and prosper by entering new markets will be severely restricted by Inchgreen remaining derelict and not properly maintained.

We see the only prospect of thriving shipbuilding and marine engineering industries returning to provide high quality jobs to the people of Inverclyde is to remove the stranglehold Clydeport/Peel Ports has on our community and derelict industrial land.

We look forward to the committee's consideration of our submission.