

British Steel launches weathering steel with 120-year lifespan for construction

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A new steel product for the construction sector has been launched by British Steel – with a lifespan of up to 120 years.

The Scunthorpe-headquartered giant, relieved to have seen safeguards against cheap imports upheld, has unveiled weathering steel structural sections.

It is part of a long-held strategy to develop high value products that will differentiate UK manufacturing from the mass commodity market.

Described as self-protecting, durable and attractive, those behind the innovation say it is ideal for a whole range of outdoor structures in exposed locations – including bridges, buildings and catenary gantries on railway lines – used to suspend the cables providing the overhead electrification.

The steel's corrosion rate is so low that structures fabricated from unpainted weathering steel can last almost as long as the works have been producing, with only minimal maintenance.

British Steel's commercial director for construction, Ben Cunliffe, said: "Weathering steel is another superb example of our commitment to delivering quality products and services through rigorous research and development.



The weathering steel structural sections.

(Image: Duncan Loughrey)

"It is a high-strength, low alloy steel that defends itself from corrosion by forming a protective oxide patina – a layer – eliminating the need for paint or other protective coatings. This makes weathering steel an attractive and economic solution for many structures."

The team said the weathering steel offers significant advantages over other metals for structures that are exposed to the elements, with low maintenance, speed of construction and environmental benefits associated with not needing to paint.

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British Steel is the only UK manufacturer of structural sections, with production taking place in Scunthorpe before it is rolled into sections at its Teesside Beam Mill.

A thorough testing programme has also been undertaken ahead of the launch.

The unveiling comes seven months after [British Steel launched its S460M high-strength structural steel](#) grades for construction. It was the first new launch in the Jingye era.