

[New flood defence gates for Port of Tilbury in £34 million scheme](#)

In a project of national importance, the existing port lock gates will be replaced with pioneering dual function lock gates, and the Environment Agency's tidal barrier will be removed.

This is a major joint project between the Environment Agency and The Port of Tilbury that will safeguard thousands of homes and businesses in the local area.

Work started in January and is expected to last for 18 months with the new lock gates planned for installation in late 2021/early 2022.

Rendering of the proposed outer lock gates at the entrance to the Port of Tilbury (looking west)

Once the work is completed it will ensure a high standard of flood protection for Tilbury and provide a new navigation lock for operations at the busy port.

Planning for this project has been underway with the [Environment Agency](#) and the [Port of Tilbury](#) for several years. With total scheme costs of around £34 million, the Port of Tilbury London Ltd (PoTLL) is providing a multi-million-pound contribution to the project and will take responsibility for operation and maintenance of the new dual function structure. Funding has also been secured from the Anglian (Eastern) Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Councillor Gerard Rice represents Thurrock Council on this Committee.

The Environment Agency's [Thames Estuary Asset Management 2100 Programme](#) (TEAM2100) will deliver the work in partnership with a number of contractors including [Jacobs](#) and [Balfour Beatty](#).

Sir James Bevan, Environment Agency Chief Executive said:

We are investing £5.2 billion in flood defences over the next 6 years. The Port of Tilbury is vital to our national economy. The new scheme is an important and exciting project that has both a flood protection and navigational purpose, and will help protect jobs and growth.

The Tilbury barrier will reduce flood risk for the port, residents and business. It is a key part of the Environment Agency's new Flood Strategy, which aims to make the country resilient to flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.

Charles Hammond OBE, Group Chief Executive of Forth Ports (owners of the Port of Tilbury) said:

This is a vital strategic project for not only the port but to safeguard the local community from any flood threat. We have worked with the Environment Agency for a number of years to carefully plan this major project and it is through this successful collaboration that this innovative scheme will become a reality.

Commenting on the project, Paul Dale, Port of Tilbury's Asset and Site Director said:

This is a very important project and an impressive engineering solution that will provide flood defences for homes and businesses in the area for decades to come while ensuring the smooth marine operations at The Port of Tilbury.

Helena Henao Fernandez, Environment Agency Deputy Programme Director and Sam Stevens, TEAM2100 Delivery Partner Programme Director said:

We are excited with TEAM2100 progressing the Tilbury dual function lock gate project into the final stage of construction. This is a complex project that has required extensive planning, complex design solutions and strong collaboration between the Environment Agency, Port of Tilbury and the TEAM2100 delivery team. We look forward to playing our part in bringing this project to a safe conclusion, so that it can provide critical flood protection to Tilbury and the local communities for many years to come.

Paul Hayden, Regional Flood and Coastal Committee chair, said:

This important project has been supported by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee for many years. It is excellent news that construction has started.

Rendering of the proposed outer lock gates at the entrance to the Port of Tilbury (looking east)

This scheme is part of the government's long-term investment in flood and coastal defences. Since 2015 it has invested £2.6 billion to better protect the country from flooding and coastal erosion and is on course to have better protected 300,000 homes by March 2021. Earlier this year, the government announced a record £5.2 billion investment in flood and coastal defences and the [National FCRM Strategy](#) will help build a better prepared and more

resilient nation.

The original port lock gates were installed in 1928 and Tilbury Barrier was constructed in 1980-1981.

Media enquiries only

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Notes to editors

The Environment Agency Tilbury Barrier forms part of the Thames defences that reduce flood risk to the Purfleet, Grays and Tilbury flood cell along with The Port of Tilbury. There are 9,295 residential properties at risk in the flood cell. The Port of Tilbury is the largest multi-modal port in the South East. Sitting on the north bank of the Thames just 22 nautical miles east of central London, it is perfectly placed to handle cargo for London and the rest of the South East, with easy access to the M25 and 18 million people within 75 miles.

The port has an annual throughput of 16 million tonnes per annum, estimated to have a value around £8.7 billion. The varied cargoes are spread across an estate in excess of 1,000 acres and are imported and exported by a variety of short and deep-sea vessels. Offering operational support for different cargoes, the port can support ro-ro, container, forest products, grain, and bulks as well as passenger cruises.

The current Tilbury Barrier was installed in 1981 and has already passed its designed maximum number of closures and had a number of required modifications. The Port of Tilbury London Limited (PoTLL) in planning the replacement of 2 sets of lock gates was keen to partner with the Environment Agency (EA) and install an outer set of gates, which can act in both an impoundment function and flood defence function.

The site area falls within the Thames Estuary 2100 strategy, which was approved by the EA Board in 2010 and by Defra and HM Treasury in 2012. The strategy sets out recommendations for managing tidal flood risk across the estuary until the end of the century and beyond. In January 1953, over 2,500 properties flooded in Tilbury in a tidal surge that claimed 307 lives in England.

The Thames Estuary Asset Management 2100 (TEAM2100) programme

The Thames Estuary Asset Management 2100 (TEAM2100) programme pioneers a new asset management approach for the Environment Agency, investing early to maintain the condition of flood defence assets to reduce the risk of failure. The programme aims to ensure that the tidal walls, embankments, and barriers along the Thames Estuary continue to protect 1.3 million people and £275 billion of property from tidal flooding.

The programme of work includes detailed engineering investigation, repair and refurbishment work to flood defence assets across the estuary. This work will maintain or improve the condition of current flood defences and the standard of protection they offer. The programme started in 2014 and is being jointly delivered by the Environment Agency, Jacobs and Balfour Beatty, along with other suppliers. It is the UK's largest single programme of flood risk management work, valued at over £300m in total, and is one of the government's top 40 major infrastructure projects.

About Forth Ports/Port of Tilbury and Tilbury 2

Forth Ports Limited owns and operates Tilbury, alongside 7 other commercial ports on the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Tay: Grangemouth, Dundee, Leith, Rosyth, Methil, Burntisland and Kirkcaldy.

The Port of Tilbury is the number one UK port for forestry products, construction materials, paper, grain, recyclables and warehousing space. The port has a strong market presence in bulk commodities, ro-ro, cars and cruise vessels. The port's London Container Terminal handles a mix of short and deep-sea services, is the UK's number 4 port for containers and has the greatest reefer (refrigerated container) point connectivity in Europe. Tilbury's strategic location makes it a natural point for distribution, with nearly 20 million people living within 75 miles. Serving the UK's market, the port offers customers excellent transport links to and from the UK's capital and across the South East where over 50% of the population live and work. The port is a diverse multi-modal hub, covering around 1,100 acres (850 acres and the London Distribution Park, in addition to the Tilbury 2 site) and is well positioned to access the M25 orbital motorway and the rest of the UK's national motorway network. In addition, there are direct rail connections within the port and dedicated barge facilities.

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