

Press release: Tidal flood barrier gate arrives in Ipswich

A 200 tonne tidal gate has arrived in Suffolk, ready to be installed at Ipswich's new flood barrier.

The delivery of the gate from its manufacturing site in Rotterdam, Holland, is a significant step towards the completion of the Environment Agency's £70 million project.

The work was carried out by Hollandia, a sub-contractor for Environment Agency contractor VBA – a joint venture between VolkerStevin, Boskalis Westminster and Atkins.

It took 2 years to design and build the gate and 24 hours for it to be transported across the North Sea, finally passing under the Orwell Bridge and entering Ipswich early on the morning of Friday 27 October.

The gate is 22 metres wide and will stand 9 metres tall when in its "closed position". It is finished with 5 tonnes of special paint that will help protect it, as it spends most of its life under water.

Special crane will be used to install 200 tonne gate

The gate is currently on a barge in the Port of Ipswich, while a crane big enough to lift it into place is delivered to site and constructed.

The 1,000 tonne crane will be assembled on the construction site on the middle island of the Port of Ipswich.

Once the crane is complete, the gate will be installed into the barrier structure in the upright position, which is its "maintenance position".

The main hydraulic rams and control systems can then be installed and there will be a testing period of a further 8 weeks.

Andrew Usborne, Project Manager, said:

This is a key milestone for the project and sees the final elements of the barrier arriving on site.

The construction of the crane will take several days, and this is a very busy period for what has been a long-running project.

It's another step closer to significantly improving the flood protection for Ipswich.

The Ipswich Flood Defence Management Strategy (IFDMS) will increase the

standard of protection to 0.33% (greater than 1 in 200) and takes into account current climate change predictions. The 0.33% relates to the probability of a combined fluvial and tidal flood event happening in any one year.

The final element of the scheme involves building a tidal barrier across the New Cut River in Ipswich, with associated works to tie it into the new east and west bank walls and gates. The barrier is expected to be operational in the spring of 2018.

The flood defence scheme, which will reduce the risk of flooding to 1,608 homes and 422 businesses and support key infrastructure, has been partnership funded by: the Environment Agency, Ipswich Borough Council, Department for Communities and Local Government, the Haven Gateway Partnership, and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.