

Work Starts on Felixstowe Expansion

Work has started at the Port of Felixstowe on the latest expansion of the UK's largest container port.

VSBW Joint Venture, a consortium of VolkerStevin and Boskalis Westminster, has been appointed as the lead contractor to extend the port's Berth 9 by 190 metres. The work will increase the combined lengths of Berths 8&9 to 920 metres, giving the port even greater flexibility to berth the world's largest container ships.

The Boskalis Westminster dredger, *Causeway*, began dredging the area on 13 April 2014. The initial dredging is in preparation for construction to begin in the summer. The project will involve dredging 1 million cubic metres of material to provide the berth and approaches, and enable a new steel-piled quay wall to be built.

Commenting on the project, Clemence Cheng, Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited Chief Executive Officer, said:

"The scale of operations at the Port of Felixstowe already gives us the ability to berth more large container ships simultaneously than other ports in the UK. The new extension will increase the berthing permutations we can offer and continue to ensure that we turn our customers' vessels around in the quickest possible time.

"Felixstowe's location closest to the main shipping lanes and the ports of Northern Europe already saves our customers both time and money. Combined with the best road and rail connections to serve the UK, the new extension will further extend our advantage as the port-of-choice for deep-sea container ship operators."

Ian Cussons, VSBW Project Manager said:

"We were delighted to secure the contract for the Berth 9 extension at Felixstowe and are ready to mobilise all the necessary resources in the very near future. The tubular pile design is very similar to the existing Berths 8&9 and will be built to allow the water alongside to be dredged to 18 metres depth."

Piling of the quay wall for the new extension will start later in the summer with construction due to complete in mid-2015. The new extension will be equipped with three new ship-to-shore gantry cranes, each with a 25-container wide outreach.

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