

Smarter Greener Logistics

Piers for Freight

Festival Pier



Festival Pier



Festival Pier is located on the south side of the River Thames on South Bank, next to the Royal Festival Hall at the heart of the Southbank Centre. Popular for corporate and private charters, Festival Pier is also a stop for Thames River Sightseeing.

The Pier Information Sheet provides key information on the pier and surrounding area for river freight operations and onward journeys via cargo bike.

Location

Address: Festival Pier, London SE1 8XZ
Borough: Lambeth
Google map pin: GV4M+P3 London, UK
what3words: [///tower.monday.lives](https://www.what3words.com/#!/en/@@@tower.monday.lives)

Landside Access

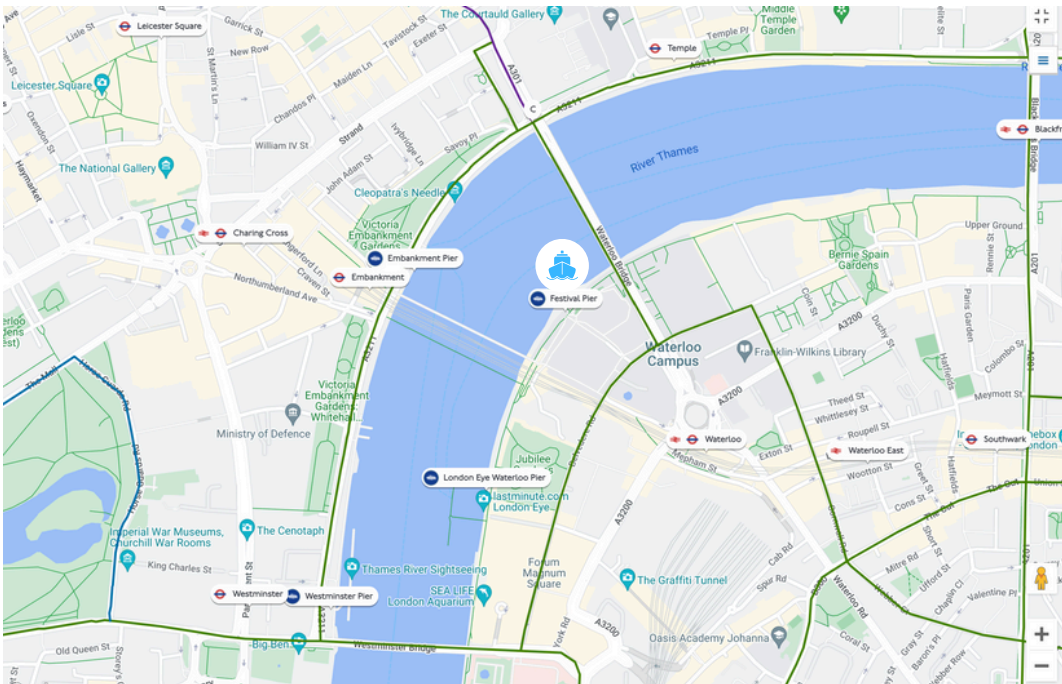
The pier is accessed via The Queen's Walk, a shared-use walkway, which runs along the bank of the Thames and connects to Belvedere Road via e.g. Southbank Centre's service yard.



South Bank

The South Bank is a lively riverside area in London, known for its cultural attractions like the Southbank Centre, London Eye, National Theatre, and Tate Modern. The Queen's Walk, a bustling promenade along the Thames, connects key venues and draws large crowds of tourists and locals enjoying street performances, restaurants, and river views. Cycling restrictions apply in crowded sections, and cyclists are often required to dismount to ensure pedestrian safety.

Area Context



Festival Pier is located on the south side of the River Thames on South Bank, between the Hungerford and Waterloo bridges. Waterloo is located to the southeast and Embankment directly across the river to the northwest.

Cycleway 10 can be joined near Festival Pier on Belvedere Road. C10 runs from Waterloo to Greenwich. This cycleway offers a dedicated, segregated path, making it a convenient and safe route for both commuting and leisure cycling along the Thames, seamlessly integrating with other key cycling routes in central London.

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Pier Technical Specifications

Brow width: 2.5m

Height restrictions: 2.1m

Brow Gradient: 1 in 4.7 (Mean low water springs).

Operational space (sqm): main pier approx. 200 sqm, brow approx. 100 sqm, entrance area approx. 50 sqm.

Storage space available: none

There is step-free access from The Queen's Walk pathway to Festival Pier; however, the gradient can be steep, and there are no ramps available at the pontoon level to board vessels. Operators would need to bring their own ramps to access boats.

The pier is completely sheltered.

The pier has access to drinking water, power, and existing CCTV cameras.

Vessel Considerations

Vessel size constraints: 32m, max 50-60m (depending on door configuration).

Speed limit: Pier is located within the designated 25-knot speed limit zone



Existing Pier Use

Pier type: Passenger services

Private and corporate charters: Thames River Sightseeing, Thames RIB Experience, London Party Boats, Circular Cruise Westminster, and other ad-hoc charters

Timetable

Varies depending on private and corporate events. More regular tours tend to start around 09:00 and end at approximately 18:00.

Works Schedule

TfL is seeking interest from the market to redevelop the pier. The official TfL tender can be found [here](#).



Ownership

Pier Owner: London River Services Limited (division of TfL)

Landside Owner: London Borough of Lambeth

Key Pier Stakeholders

- London River Services
- London Borough of Lambeth
- Listed private and corporate charters

Contact Information

POC: David Panayiotou

Email: river@tfl.gov.uk

Phone: 0343 222 2222

LB Lambeth Local Plan (September 2021)

“Lambeth will support and promote use of the River Thames as a strategic transport route for passengers and freight.” (p.145)

“Work in partnership with government, Transport for London, Network Rail and major developers to increase public transport capacity and reduce reliance on the private car, promote walking and cycling, and provide alternatives to road-based freight transport.” (p.37)

“The council will apply London Plan policy T7 to promote sustainable freight and servicing.” (p.150)

“Waterloo’s proximity to the River Thames provides significant potential to increase the movement of freight along the river, including construction related movements.” (p.231)

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Nearby Commercial Activity & Industrial Land

Over 300 businesses in the local South Bank area, as well as tourist attractions (London Eye, County Hall) as well as artistic and event venues (Southbank Centre, National Theatre, British Film Institute).

No large industrial or logistics land nearby, besides the underused undercroft space underneath Waterloo Station (more details [here](#)).

Wider Stakeholders

Neighbouring stakeholders potentially impacted by freight activity:

- South Bank BID businesses (commercial)
- Southbank Centre (complex of artistic venues)
- National Theatre (artistic venue)
- British Film Institute (event and cultural venues)
- The Whitehouse (mixed-use, commercial & residential)

Potential Consolidation Opportunities

Potential consolidation opportunities identified in close proximity to Festival Pier:

Storage Space on Festival Pier



Cages and office / storage unit on Festival Pier.

Underneath Queen Elizabeth Hall



Situated underneath Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall facing north.

Southbank Centre's Service Yard



Located between The Queen's Walk and Belvedere Road. Shipping containers already being used on-site.

Welfare Facilities

Accessible toilets located on The Queen's Walk. Approx. 160m from Festival Pier. There is a small charge to use this facility.



Local Logistics Hubs

Better Bankside's [Green Logistics Centre](#) (GLC), a space where local businesses can consolidate their deliveries, reducing the number of polluting vehicle journeys in the neighbourhood.

Local Low Emission Couriers

- Pedal Me hub on [Ewer Street](#)
- Delivery Mates (GLC)

CRP logistics related reports and guidance:

- [SGL Unpacked: Urban Logistics Hubs. Pimlico Micro Logistics Hub Trial](#)
- [How to Support a Micro Logistics Hub in your Borough: A Guide for Local Authorities](#)
- [Installing Infrastructure to Support Micro Logistics: Developing a hub in the Southside Shopping Centre](#)



Visit [CRP's Urban Logistics Hub Map](#)

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Route A: Festival Pier to Belvedere Road via Southbank Centre's Service Yard



Recommended route starts at Festival Pier with space by the pier's entrance on The Queen's Walk for short-term cargo bike parking. From Festival Pier proceed straight ahead, crossing The Queen's Walk, a shared-use path for pedestrians and cyclists. Continue straight ahead underneath the Southbank Centre's yellow stairs, passing the skatepark in the undercroft of the Southbank Centre. Moveable bollards are in

place to enter the service yard, with a distance of 1.1m. After the bollards, continue straight ahead along the road on the service yard. At the end of the service yard's main road, pass the security operated, moveable bollards (distance of 1.1m) to exit on to Belvedere Road. Turn left to continue your journey, as this section of Belvedere Road is currently one-way heading eastbound.

Route A Considerations

- The Queen's Walk is a heavily pedestrianised walkway with potential pedestrian/cargo bike conflict.
- Recommended route for cargo bikes minimises the use of The Queen's Walk.



- Access at moveable bollards at the service yard's entrances and exits would need to be provided due to 1.1m minimum distance.



Key Considerations for Cargo Bike Logistics:

- Location for loading/unloading
- Suitable waiting area for operational cargo bikes & riders
- Welfare facilities for riders (e.g. bike maintenance, toilets, refreshments)
- Potential consolidation locations
- Security access (if required)
- Physical barriers/obstacles along route (e.g. bollards, barriers)
- Pedestrian/cargo bike conflict at different times of the day/week
- Links to road/cycle network
- Road surface quality



Read CRP's report
[Mapping the Cycle
Logistics Sector in
London](#)

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Onward Journeys

Cycle Radius



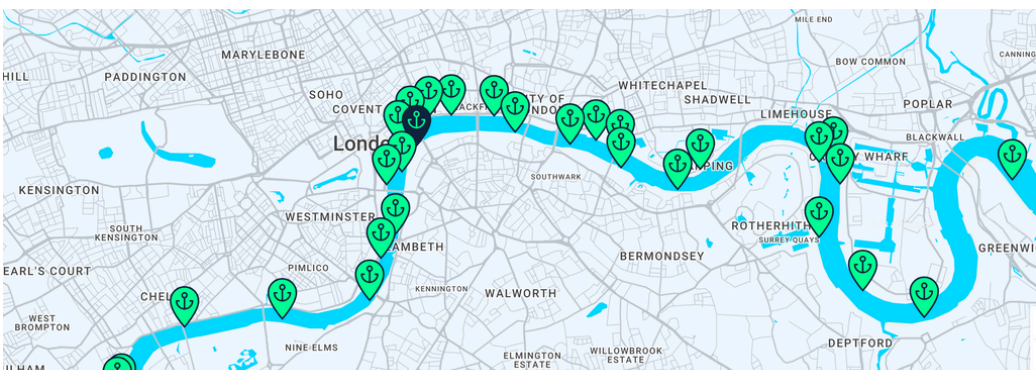
Map shows locations in London that can be reached from Festival Pier by non e-assist cycle in 15 and 30 minutes.

London Boroughs reached within 15 minutes: Westminster, Wandsworth, Lambeth, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Hackney, Islington, Camden


Additional London Boroughs & Corporations reached within 30 minutes: Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Lewisham

Key areas and destinations within this radius: Soho, Victoria, South Bank, Canada Water, Battersea Power Station

London Pier Network



Festival Pier (highlighted above) is located on the south side of the River Thames on South Bank and forms part of the London Pier network. Adjacent piers include London Eye Waterloo Pier to the southwest, Bankside Pier to the east, and Embankment Pier directly across the river to the northwest.

 Visit [CRP's Thames Directory](#) - an interactive web tool providing information on utilising The River Thames to transport goods into London.

CRP river freight related reports and guidance:

- [Light Freight: Design Solutions for Thames Freight Infrastructure](#)
- [River Freight Monitoring: Butler's Wharf and Dartford Pier](#)
- [Getting Started with River Freight: A Guide for Businesses](#)
- [River Freight Pilot Case Study: Summer 2022](#)
- [A Deep Dive: London Light Freight River Trial](#)
- [River Freight Pilot Part Two: Lessons Learned](#)



Next Steps

There is a huge opportunity to transport goods in to central London via the River Thames, providing significant environmental benefits and new business growth for London. Consequently, the following next steps could be taken to encourage river freight operations to Festival Pier:

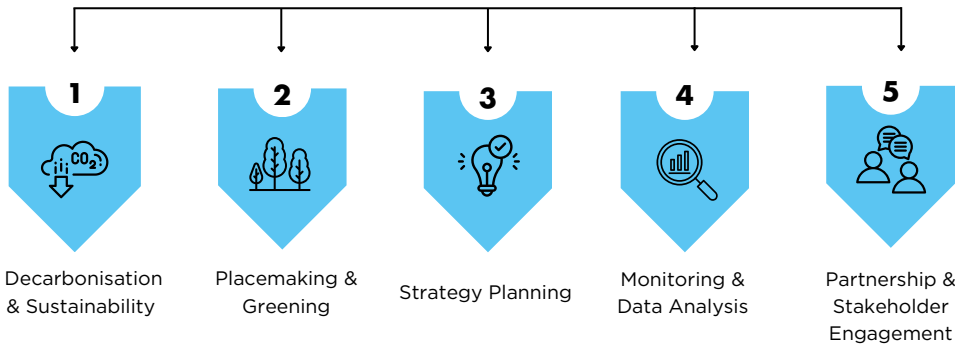
- With TfL seeking market interest to redevelop Festival Pier through a tender process, there is a significant opportunity to integrate river freight infrastructure into the plans, complementing the redevelopment's broader objectives.
- Present the identified route and consolidation space opportunities to the Southbank Centre to secure their support for potential future river freight operations.
- Explore solutions to improve accessibility at Festival Pier, including assessing options for incorporating ramps at the pontoon level to facilitate step-free access for river freight operators and passengers.
- Collaborate with Healthmatic, the nearby toilet facility management company, to explore the possibility of providing river freight operations staff with e.g. secure access cards for free access to the facilities.

Additionally, more can be done to encourage river freight operation across London at scale. This includes:

- Raising awareness of river freight including benefits and potential opportunities.
- Prioritising space near / close to piers for freight activities such as consolidation and loading
- Developing a standardised licensing process to allow operators to deliver to central London piers more easily
- Lobbying government to encourage river freight activities through policy updates and increased investment
- Encouraging joint strategic approaches and partnerships to facilitate river freight operations.

CRP Support

Consultancy Services



Cross River Partnership (CRP) is a partnership delivering impactful environmental, economic and community focused projects. We support public, private and community organisations with expert guidance, collaboration and innovation. We believe in a fair and equitable transition towards good and green growth in London.

CRP has project delivery expertise supporting organisations to realise the potential of the river for sustainable logistics. CRP's delivery portfolio includes:

- Innovative river freight pilots
- Pier feasibility studies
- River freight guidance for businesses

CRP also has project delivery expertise in Decarbonisation & Sustainability, Placemaking & Greening, Strategy Planning, Monitoring & Data Analysis and Partnership & Stakeholder Engagement.

For further information, contact CRP Senior Programme Manager [Fiona Coull](#).

This document was prepared as part of the [Smarter Greener Logistics](#) programme on behalf of [Defra](#), to clean up London's air, including by more freight coming into central London via river rather than road.