

PLANNING ACT 2008
INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE)
RULES 2010

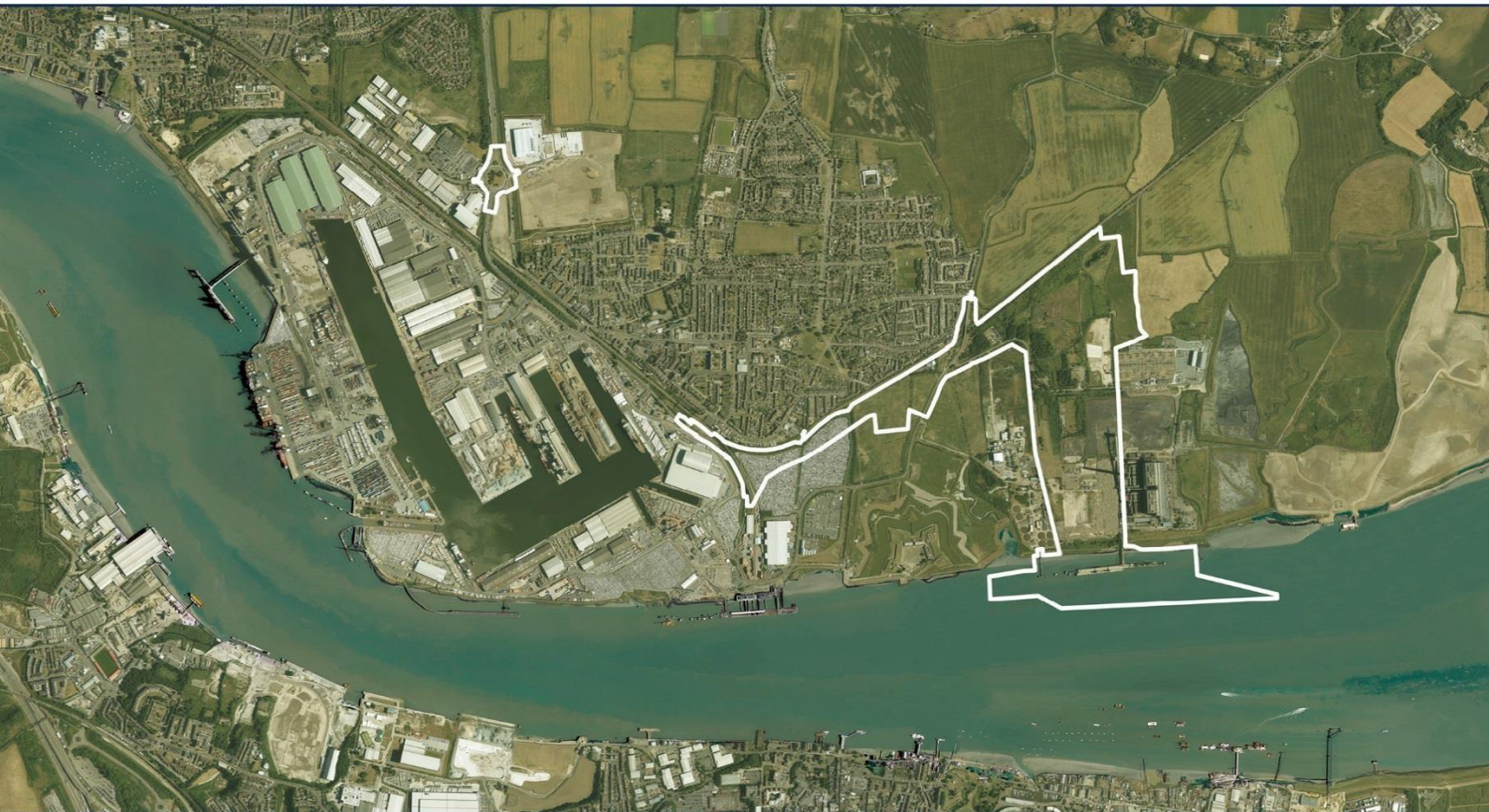
PROPOSED PORT TERMINAL AT
FORMER TILBURY POWER STATION

TILBURY2

TR030003

FILMING AT TILBURY FORT

TILBURY2 DOCUMENT REF: PoTLL/T2/EX/88



Proposed Port Terminal 'Tilbury2'

THE IMPACT T2 WILL HAVE ON FILMING REVENUES IN TILBURY

Application by Port of Tilbury London Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent
for a Proposed Port Terminal at the Former Tilbury Power Station ('Tilbury2')

The impact T2 will have on filming revenues in Tilbury by Supervising Location Manager
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on the
QT

www.onthe-qt.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an expert industry review of the realities of filming at Tilbury, the positive impact T2 is likely to have on filming revenues in the area, and addresses specific points raised in English Heritage examination submissions.

English Heritage has stated that over 75% of the revenue at Tilbury Fort comes from the film industry, who use the site for location shooting. English Heritage has made written and oral submissions stating their belief that Tilbury2 (T2) will harm these revenues. We have reviewed their position and have used considerable industry experience and expertise to consider the likely effects and outcomes of the Tilbury2 development. It is our professional opinion that the outcome of T2 will provide increased interest and opportunities for the continuation of filming revenue at Tilbury.

The Realities of Filming at Tilbury

Tilbury is not currently an optimal location for filming due to its location (in this case, lack of proximity to London studios). This incurs additional costs to productions due to travel time and cost, and the consequential effects on time required to work in the day commonly resulting in having to pay overtime to crew. These issues cost productions something in the region of £120,000 per day extra to film at Tilbury, compared to other locations closer to the London studios or with faster access links.

Even without any change in environment or development within the setting of Tilbury Fort, the popularity and use of Tilbury Fort for filming will be affected by numerous outside drivers. These drivers include new union legislation, additional competition against London locations from both within the UK and Europe, and an uncertain future for the existing UK film industry tax breaks and potential tariffs. All of these factors mean that forecasting film revenue for any location including Tilbury is extremely risky and subject to large fluctuations and no organisation, well advised, should rely upon or build its future revenue case relying predominantly on this area of uncertain revenue.

The Positive Impact of T2

Many of the issues with filming at Tilbury will be alleviated – not exacerbated – by T2. This is in part due to the new port increasing the number of viable film locations in the area (which saves productions money, making the entire area a more desirable location) and increasing the accessibility and local infrastructure.

Finally, this report also rebuts many of the specific claims made in the English Heritage representations, including the perceived problems with background noise and new background built features.

In conclusion, the construction of T2 is likely to bring greater opportunity and economies of scale for any film production and do far more good than harm for filming at Tilbury Fort and in the Tilbury area.

INTRODUCTION

We understand from English Heritage stated priorities that:

"Inspiration, Conservation, Involvement and Financial Sustainability." are the four stated priorities and that they also state in this context that: *"We want to create inspiring visitor experiences that bring the story of England to life. We will also make sure our historic sites and artefacts are expertly cared for, so that they can be enjoyed by future generations. We'll find new ways to involve more people in our work and our target is to ensure we're financially independent by 2022/23."*

We therefore understand from this statement and representations in examination that it is important that Tilbury Fort can raise revenue to continue to promote its historical significance, and provide funds for upkeep, conservation and enhancements. It is understood that this revenue comes predominantly from three stated sources: visitors, residential rental revenue, and film companies, who use the setting for location film shooting. In this context it should also be noted that the current Tilbury Port is also used as a film location. The Tilbury2 (T2) proposals will not put these filming opportunities at risk, but will actually create greater opportunity and diversity within the location which could enhance the opportunity and productive offer of film location.

Furthermore, the development of T2 will encourage further visitors through its proposed active travel measures. In addition, more film makers are likely to be drawn to the area as there is more to visit and a bigger variety of locations to film, as well as likely cost savings compared to the current realities of filming at Tilbury. Lots of locations situated in close proximity to each other eases the logistical burden of filming, and allows filmmakers to tighten production timescales and deliver greater productivity.

This report provides a realistic, expert industry review of filming at Tilbury, and rebuts many of the claims from the English Heritage representations and assertions. Tilbury is not currently an optimal location for filming, and the development of T2 can only benefit filming in the area, not harm or hinder it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Georgette Turner is a Film Location Manager and Studio Build Consultant with over 10 years' experience in the industry. She has worked on numerous major productions, including *Wonder Woman*, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, *Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, and *Edge of Tomorrow*. She is the Location Management Union representative with BECTU (The union that covers all crew in the UK film industry), and co-founder and managing director of www.onthe-qt.com, a film location management agency and consultancy firm.

THE REALITIES OF FILMING AT TILBURY – A FILM LOCATION INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

Despite claims to the contrary, Tilbury is not a favourable site for filming. For the extra money needed to film at Tilbury, a film may as well travel to Manchester or Liverpool where they can find similar locations, have a wider variety of period locations in a close proximity to each other and cheaper labour and location rates.

This is due to a multitude of factors, including:

- Lost shoot time;
- Broken Turnarounds;
- Lack of local infrastructure;
- Costs of insurance; and
- Lack of other locations in the area.

Each of these factors is discussed in turn below.

LOST SHOOT TIME

Tilbury is too far away from London to be seen as a viable location by many productions, and its location has a huge cost implication on filming budgets. The PACT and BECTU film agreement has nominated bases for a film or TV (including daily mileage and travel time to and from Tilbury Fort) are:

- Ealing Studios – 87 miles per day – 3 hours travel time
- Shepperton Studios – 126 Miles per day – 4 hours travel time
- Twickenham Studios – 144 miles per day – 3 hours travel time
- Pinewood Studios – 105 miles per day – 3 hours travel time
- Warner Brothers Studios Leavesden – 96 Miles per day – 3 hours travel time
- West London Film Studio – 95 mile per day – 3 hours travel time
- Elstree Studios – 83 miles per day – 2.5 hours travel time
- 3 Mills Studios -48 miles per day – 2 hours travel time

In a standard 11-hour continuous filming day, it is necessary to incorporate travel time as well as shoot time. For example, if a film was operating from Shepperton Studios, they would have to allow 3 hours travel, leaving only 8 hours per day for filming. The cost implications of these 3 lost hours are substantial for most productions: 1 hours' filming on a medium budget feature is estimated at a cost of £50,000. The alternative is to pay a travel allowance to crew of 1.5x standard rate for the travelling hours.

As the working Day is never usually cut, travel will be paid on top of a daily rate, filming at Tilbury costs a production between £50,000 and £120,000 extra per day depending on the size of the crew.

BROKEN TURNAROUNDS

The additional costs due to travel time outlined above do not factor in department pre-calls and camera overtime which would put most of the crew on an 18 hour day plus travel time. As a result of new Union legislation brought in for April 2018, this long day then pushes the production into what is known as 'Broken Turnaround'. This is a separate overtime calculated at 1.5x base hourly rate. This could incur the same costs (an additional £50,000 to £120,000 per day) again.

Travel and shoot has to be approved by all heads of department as there is a huge health and safety implication for crew members. Additionally, working and driving these hours is currently under review by an "eyes wide shut" Union committee. This committee could further hamper the attractiveness of filming at Tilbury.

LACK OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The only other option to avoid overtime costs associated with filming at Tilbury is to 'overnight' the crew in local hotels. However, the Tilbury area lacks the infrastructure to deal with the amount of crew needing to stay in hotels. Something that T2 could eventually cause to improve, as the demand for local accommodation is likely to increase.

COST OF INSURANCE

Tilbury Fort is not favourable with filming insurers thanks to a past incident that saw Storm Katie blow down a set, causing thousands of pounds of damage and nearly injuring several members of the crew who were filming at the time. This incident has resulted in higher-than-normal insurance fees to film in Tilbury Fort.

This further adds to the additional costs associated with filming at Tilbury Fort in comparison to other locations.

LACK OF OTHER LOCATIONS IN THE AREA

Currently there are three key areas for filming in Tilbury: The Historic Cruise Terminal, the East Tilbury Estate, and Tilbury Fort. In order to save money on the production, it is the Location Manager's job to create 'small worlds' that capture as much of the script as possible. The lack of controllable roads, build space, walkways, infrastructure and other locations in the vicinity makes the Tilbury area a hard sell to production. The more production days that can be filled in one area, the cheaper it becomes to film providing increased productivity and economy of scale.

Expansion at Tilbury with T2 will allow this to happen. The Olympic Park is a prime example of this from recent history in East London: Stratford has both historic and modern locations

that were always considered too far East for filming. Since the Olympic Park expansion, there has been a significant increase in filming in the borough of Newham thanks to the greater availability of parking, increased mobility and accessibility, and change in variety of new features. The new locations on offer coupled with the old makes it easy for productions to move between them, and the presence of hotels and local retailers caters for crew needs.

Another example concerns Tilbury itself: *Wonder Woman* picked the Tilbury Cruise Terminal as a location and then used the Fort as an additional filming location, since they were already in the vicinity. However, it is interesting to note that it was the Port that was the attraction and reason the location was chosen and the Fort incidental to that use due to its proximity to the Port.

OUTSIDE FACTORS THAT WILL INFLUENCE THE LONDON FILM INDUSTRY IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS

Forecasting to generate a specific income in the film industry is – to an extent – like forecasting to win the lottery and is very influenced by fashions and trends as well as costs and ease of availability and use.

Additionally, there are several new outside factors at play that will have a significant impact on the British film industry over the next two years, including:

- New Union restrictions;
- Competition for British locations from Europe;
- Competition for London locations from within the UK; and
- An uncertain future for the UK filming tax breaks and any effect of potential future tariffs.

Each of these factors is discussed below.

THE IMPACT OF NEW UNION RESTRICTIONS

The PACT/BECTU restrictions previously mentioned will be enforced from April 2018 and change the margins for travel. Productions will no longer be able to base themselves near a location so that crew cannot charge for travel. They will only be able to pick one of the designated studios mentioned earlier in this report and the costs will then derive from the standardised rates set.

COMPETITION FOR BRITISH INDUSTRY FROM EUROPE

Like most industries in the United Kingdom, the film industry has been impacted by Brexit and the initial weakening of and then fluctuations in Sterling. Other European countries have

seized the opportunity to take some of the film work that would previously have come to the UK.

For example, Hungary has provided an incredibly favourable tax break to film productions in an effort to ramp up its own industry centred around the capital, Budapest. Budapest boasts cheaper labour, stunning period architecture and excellent support facilities. Period dramas and TV dramas that would previously have been based in and around London are now favouring Budapest.

Northern Ireland has also increased tax breaks, and will seek to capitalise on the success of *Game of Thrones* to position itself as a key player in the TV and film location industry.

Britain has major competition like it has never had before from outside the UK, with multiple studios being constructed in Italy (Milan), Serbia (Belgrade) and many, many more making planning applications. Our appeal as a country for filming is quickly diminishing and could be further affected by the ability of international film crews to travel within and to and from the UK with ease and simplicity.

COMPETITION FOR LONDON FROM WITHIN THE UK

Yorkshire now has substantial regional tax breaks to entice filming away from London. Again, this will have a big effect this year, as London is increasingly perceived as overpriced and overused. Established 'rivals' to London like Liverpool and Manchester boast a superb array of locations, and are seeing ever-increasing numbers of productions choosing their services over London-based locations. Availability and lower costs in other areas of the UK – such as the aforementioned Liverpool, Manchester and Yorkshire – could see London lose out further this year.

Additionally, there are studios being built within the UK, with Belfast and no less than three studios in Edinburgh in the pipeline drawing the focus and start base for travel costs and hourly rates away from London and the south east.

UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR EXISTING UK TAX BREAKS

UK tax breaks are only in place under the current government. Opposition parties (from their stated positions) will not be prioritising film tax incentives if they were to gain power. In addition, the future is uncertain on the controls, tariffs and travel situation that will arise in the short to medium term, bringing further uncertainty for advance planning for filming and production.

ADDRESSING SPECIFIC POINTS FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE RESPONSE DOCUMENT

ADDRESSING SECTION 4.6

Several key points from section 4.6 of English Heritage's written representation are addressed and rebutted below:

- **Proximity to central London**

As per above this is not accurate – the distance from London makes the location out of the 25 mile industry guideline and costs will be directly affected from April 2018.

- **Large areas of controllable hardstanding – both the parade ground, old visitor car park and surrounding marshland are essential in allowing us to facilitate large scale set builds and house unit bases/crew parking.**

This would be unaffected. There is no proposal to physically take these car parks or identified areas that would be in use. It is also possible to use trackway to make sufficient space and also use neighbouring hard stand areas in close proximity including the new and existing Port facilities.

- **Secluded location – based in an industrial estate Tilbury Fort does not suffer with noise pollution nor close/overlooking neighbours. This also allows us to comfortably facilitate low flying aerial filming with helicopters and drones**

Drones and helicopters are used at all film studios. Indeed, most of the West London Studios are in a very close proximity to Heathrow. Although helicopters are not always used for filming, they are used daily for high profile actors coming in and out of the Studios and London Locations, and there has never been an issue with noise pollution. The advancement in sound technology in the last five years means that problems of the past no longer stand. One particularly pertinent example of this happened last year during a shoot where an illegal rave was taking place opposite a location. The sound was deafening, yet in the playback there was no trace of the noise pollution thanks to the use of ADR (Additional Recording).

- **Uninterrupted views – Visually there is very little that disrupts the eye line looking out from the fort, this means the requirements for post-production editing is vastly reduced for production companies.**

VFX (Visual Effects) is now so advanced that period dramas film without stopping moving vehicles in the background. 'Painting out' unwanted background objects is now so commonplace that productions of all sizes and budgets do it. There is already existing industrial development visible from the Fort that requires painting out.

- **An incredibly diverse portfolio of locations within the site – Controllable roads, controllable waterways, parade ground, residential interiors, military interiors and exteriors, tunnels, uninterrupted marshland.**

It is unclear how any of these components will be affected by the building of T2.

ADDRESSING SECTION 4.9

In reference to section 4.9 of English Heritage's written representation – The A13, A12 and M25 are the main roads that lead to the access roads to Tilbury Fort. As a location manager, a huge part of the role is monitoring roads and traffic footfall. These roads all have notoriously bad reputations of having some of the heaviest traffic in and around London. If visitor numbers are on the increase and visitors are coming from all parts of the UK it stands to reason that one access road would not make a significant impact if they are already enduring the heavy traffic roads mentioned above. T1 has not impacted the area and as referenced in 4.9. It is also noted that the Tilbury2 proposals propose to improve local access to the Fort by road and foot and by information provision and waymarking.

VISUAL REFERENCE OF TILBURY FORT AND LINES OF SIGHT

Figure 1 below shows a view from the fort footpath clearly showing the existing wind turbines that are already a modern feature in camera shot that would have to be painted out (painting out moving images is now just as easy as static).



Figure 1 – Wind Turbines in the Background

Figure 2 below shows a view looking toward the sea clearly showing the existing power station and Boats in situ, which is a common occurrence on the Thames. The structure and noise from these existing facilities has not stopped previous filming and painting out new structures will be exactly the same process.



Figure 2 – Power Station and Vessels in the Background

Figure 3 shows another image looking toward T1 clearly showing a significant amount of modern buildings. Again, the noise and imagery have not stopped productions filming at Tilbury in the past.



Figure 3 – Modern Industrial and Infrastructure Architecture in the Background

Figure 4: Looking out toward the Thames Estuary with modern architecture in the background. Images that, once again, would need to be painted out of any period dramas. This has not stopped films that chose the location.

...particularly across the Thames estuary – and its setting in general



Figure 4 – The View Across the Estuary

BACKGROUND NOISE

Stonehenge, another Heritage site, runs alongside a very busy and visible A-Road. This does not discourage film makers applying to film there.

CONCLUSION

Tilbury Fort closed for significant periods of time for two film shoots in the past two years. The building of T2 does not change the reality of having to paint out existing industrial structures and the use of ADR as these techniques are required already.

The clustering of features and improved access and support facilities improves the potential of a location for filming and does not detract or discourage.

From an expert industry perspective there is nothing in the proposals put forward at Tilbury2 that would detract from or discourage use of the Tilbury Fort as a potential film location.

Therefore I do not see any evidence of harm arising or impact on English Heritage realising their stated priorities if they are properly advised and planned for.