# Verizon and Nokia to roll out private 5G networks across Thames Freeport’s industrial sites



Verizon Business and Nokia have secured a significant contract to deploy private 5G networks across multiple logistics, manufacturing, and innovation sites within the Thames Freeport, a designated UK free trade zone focused on revitalising the River Thames Estuary region. This initiative aims to leverage advanced 5G connectivity to enhance port operations via AI-driven data analytics, autonomous vehicle control, real-time logistics orchestration, and fostering research and development collaborations.

Nokia will serve as the exclusive hardware and software supplier for the networks, providing its Digital Automation Cloud (DAC) platform and the MX Industrial Edge (MXIE) on-premises edge computing solution. The project encompasses at least three private networks across a variety of locations, including the DP World London Gateway, Port of Tilbury, and Ford’s manufacturing plant in Dagenham. These sites represent a diverse mix of port, industrial, and manufacturing facilities within the free trade zone. The deployments are in their early stages, with networks expected to go live in the coming months.

Thames Freeport itself is a strategic economic initiative, launched in 2021 as a 34-kilometre-wide economic corridor offering tax incentives designed to boost economic growth, attract investment, and create jobs. The Freeport has already generated 1,400 jobs, with plans to increase employment to 5,000 by 2030, emphasising high-skilled job creation and workforce reskilling. The introduction of private 5G networks is seen as central to this transformation, providing the technological backbone that supports innovation and collaboration between tenants—such as Ford, DP World, and Forth Ports—and external corporate, government, and research entities.

This latest 5G deployment at Thames Freeport builds on Verizon’s expanding footprint in the UK’s industrial 5G landscape. Verizon previously secured a landmark contract with Associated British Ports (ABP) to deliver a private 5G network at the Port of Southampton, one of the UK’s busiest ports and a critical node for £40 billion in annual exports. This project, also executed in partnership with Nokia, was notable as Verizon’s first industrial 5G contract in Europe. The Southampton network aims to provide secure, low-latency connectivity to support advanced industrial applications such as predictive maintenance, automation, and supply chain logistics.

Verizon’s strategy in the UK highlights its focus on private 5G networks, especially in sectors like logistics, manufacturing, and ports, where dedicated, high-performance connectivity can drive operational improvements and economic growth. With no public wireless infrastructure presence in the UK, Verizon is positioning itself as a leading private network provider through these partnerships, utilising Nokia’s comprehensive technology suite.

The deployments also reflect a broader UK government strategy post-Brexit, which supports the creation of freeports as hubs of economic renewal and trade competitiveness, benefiting from tax breaks and streamlined customs arrangements. Private 5G is now emerging as a critical infrastructure component in these zones, enabling digital transformation and enhancing the competitiveness of UK ports on the global stage.

Thames Freeport CEO Martin Whiteley described the investment in private 5G as “the backbone of a technological transformation fuelling our long-term multi-stakeholder mission,” underscoring the role of advanced connectivity solutions in the Freeport’s economic ambitions.

As the networks progress toward full operation, the collaboration between Verizon, Nokia, and Thames Freeport stakeholders marks a significant milestone in the UK’s industrial digital transformation, setting a precedent for the adoption of private 5G in critical economic areas beyond conventional urban deployments.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.tahawultech.com/channel/nokia-and-verizon-secure-deal-to-provide-5g-to-uk-ftz/), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/verizon-wins-private-5g-contract-uks-thames-freeport-2025-06-25/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.tahawultech.com/channel/nokia-and-verizon-secure-deal-to-provide-5g-to-uk-ftz/), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/verizon-wins-private-5g-contract-uks-thames-freeport-2025-06-25/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.tahawultech.com/channel/nokia-and-verizon-secure-deal-to-provide-5g-to-uk-ftz/), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/verizon-wins-private-5g-contract-uks-thames-freeport-2025-06-25/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.abports.co.uk/news-and-media/latest-news/2021/verizon-business-signs-its-first-european-private-5g-contract-with-associated-british-ports/), [[4]](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-04-01/verizon-beats-out-european-carriers-to-run-5g-at-u-k-freeport), [[6]](https://www.fierce-network.com/5g/verizon-snags-private-5g-network-deal-uk-port-operator), [[7]](https://www.rcrwireless.com/20210401/5g/verizon-nokia-to-deploy-private-5g-in-southampton-for-associated-british-ports)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.tahawultech.com/channel/nokia-and-verizon-secure-deal-to-provide-5g-to-uk-ftz/), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/verizon-wins-private-5g-contract-uks-thames-freeport-2025-06-25/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/verizon-wins-private-5g-contract-uks-thames-freeport-2025-06-25/), [[5]](https://www.landmobile.co.uk/content/news/verizon-wins-first-5g-contract-for-uk-freeport)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.tahawultech.com/channel/nokia-and-verizon-secure-deal-to-provide-5g-to-uk-ftz/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.tahawultech.com/channel/nokia-and-verizon-secure-deal-to-provide-5g-to-uk-ftz/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/verizon-wins-private-5g-contract-uks-thames-freeport-2025-06-25/> - Verizon Business has secured a contract, in partnership with Nokia, to construct private 5G networks at Thames Freeport, a major UK shipping and logistics hub. This collaboration involves deploying dedicated 5G infrastructure across industrial sites along the River Thames Estuary, including DP World London Gateway, Port of Tilbury, and Ford's Dagenham manufacturing plant. While financial details are undisclosed, the project aims to support a 'multibillion-dollar operational transformation' of the area. The private 5G connectivity will enable advanced industrial applications like AI-driven analytics, predictive maintenance, automation, and real-time logistics coordination. Thames Freeport, designated a Free Trade Zone in 2021, spans a 34 km-wide economic corridor offering tax incentives and is central to revitalizing the region. The project highlights early-stage 5G adoption in European ports and underscores Verizon and Nokia's ongoing collaboration to provide private network solutions in markets where Verizon lacks public infrastructure. Nokia will exclusively provide the hardware and software for the networks.
3. <https://www.abports.co.uk/news-and-media/latest-news/2021/verizon-business-signs-its-first-european-private-5g-contract-with-associated-british-ports/> - Verizon Business and Associated British Ports (ABP) have announced today that they will be working together to deploy private 5G at the Port of Southampton. Delivered in partnership with Nokia, Verizon’s private 5G platform will provide one of the United Kingdom’s (UK’s) busiest ports with a secure, low-latency private network connection. ABP operates a network of 21 ports, including the Port of Southampton. Acting as the UK’s number one port responsible for £40 billion in exports from the UK every year, the Port of Southampton provides a critical link in supply chains serving businesses and manufacturers throughout the nation. It is also the UK’s number one port for cars and cruise, handling approximately 900,000 cars and welcoming millions of cruise passengers annually.
4. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-04-01/verizon-beats-out-european-carriers-to-run-5g-at-u-k-freeport> - U.S. carrier Verizon Communications Inc. has won its first industrial 5G deal in Europe, beating out local telecommunications companies and marking an early win in a push to sell the wireless systems to global businesses. Verizon will build and run a private network for Associated British Ports Holdings Ltd. in Southampton on the south coast of England, and the network will run on equipment from Finland’s Nokia Oyj, the company said in a statement on Thursday. Verizon and ABP declined to share the financial terms of the deal.
5. <https://www.landmobile.co.uk/content/news/verizon-wins-first-5g-contract-for-uk-freeport> - American carrier Verizon Communications has won its first industrial 5G deal in Europe securing a deal with Associated British Ports (ABP) to supply an upgraded wireless system at one of the UK's new freeports. Verizon will build and run a next-generation private wireless system in Southampton. The network will leverage Nokia's Digital Automation Cloud solution. Southampton is one of several, post-Brexit, low-tariff coastal business zones that will be created following last month's Budget. The Port of Southampton is currently responsible for £40bn in UK exports each year.
6. <https://www.fierce-network.com/5g/verizon-snags-private-5g-network-deal-uk-port-operator> - Verizon has scored its first European customer for private 5G wireless after introducing an international platform with Nokia last October. The carrier landed a contract with Associated British Ports (ABP) to equip the U.K. Port of Southampton with a private 5G network. The Port of Southampton is a major supply chain touch point, responsible for £40 billion in U.K. exports each year. It also serves as the U.K.’s largest port for cars (handling around 900,000 a year) and cruise liners, with millions of passengers annually. It’s just one 21 ABP-operated ports in the U.K., and according to Verizon, will be the first mainland U.K. port to boast a private 5G network.
7. <https://www.rcrwireless.com/20210401/5g/verizon-nokia-to-deploy-private-5g-in-southampton-for-associated-british-ports> - Verizon has signed its first European private 5G contract, in a deal with Associated British Ports in the UK. The US firm has been appointed to deploy private 5G at the Port of Southampton. Nokia is providing the networking infrastructure, as part of the deal it struck with Verizon in October to supply enterprises with private 5G in Europe and Asia Pacific. ABP has a shared access licence from Ofcom for band n77 at 3300–3800 MHz. Verizon Business said the deployment will be a 'completely dedicated edge compute infrastructure'.