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PRESS RELEASE

The combined transport project at the Port of Cherbourg gets the go-ahead!

"A new page will be turned for the port of Cherbourg with the new multimodal terminal due to open in 2024. It will link the South West of France to the United Kingdom via Cherbourg. Staff at Ports of Normandy and Cherbourg Port have been working hard on the project for the last two years. The public health crisis has impacted the timing of this ambitious project, which is intended to provide a response to environmental concerns, increasingly large ships and the impacts of Brexit on cross-Channel traffic. All that remained was for Brittany Ferries to firmly commit to the project. That commitment has now been given and I am delighted. I see in it their confidence in the quality of the work done by Ports of Normandy and Cherbourg Port as well as the fruit of the cohesion between the different local authorities – Normandy Regional Council, which I chair, Manche Department Council, chaired by Jean Morin, Cotentin agglomeration community headed by David Margueritte and Cherbourg en Cotentin town council, through its mayor, Benoit Arrivé. We have worked together to develop this project which will considerably expand Cherbourg Port's hinterland and strengthen its competitive position on the cross-Channel and Ireland routes. We can now start on the public consultation so as to ensure the new development is perfectly integrated in what is a highly urbanised environment." Hervé Morin, Chairman of Ports of Normandy and of Normandy Regional Council

The project

The freight ferry market is also evolving and new challenges are arising due to environmental issues, Brexit, ever larger vessels and coming changes in mobility.

All these factors are leading to a shift in trends towards more limited use of "road only" transport in favour of an increase in the use of unaccompanied trailers and alternative high-volume overland transport solutions.

With this in mind, Ports of Normandy set itself five strategic goals:

- Be able to accommodate larger ships
- Strengthen and expand its hinterland
- Meet the challenges of Brexit
- Make it possible to provide a new, efficient overland transport service that is both an alternative and a complementary solution to road haulage
- Contribute to greener and cleaner transport

A Call for Expression of Interest (CEI) was launched in 2019 to appoint a rail operator to manage a multimodal terminal at the port of Cherbourg, the only cross-Channel terminal that can easily be connected to the railway network west of the Dover Strait

Brittany Ferries replied to this CEI by proposing a railway service between Cherbourg and Bayonne. Brittany Ferries wishes to:

- Improve productivity – transport fewer road tractors (optimise loaded weight and volume) and more trailers instead by increasing the share of unaccompanied vehicles across sea freight activities as a whole
- Enhance the environmental performance of transport activities
- Strengthen its position on long routes between Spain and the Anglo-Celtic Isles and diversify its maritime offer to include rail

The project tabled by Brittany Ferries is underpinned by LOHR technology, which:

- Ensures trailer gauges are compatible with railway tunnels, which is a major constraint in France and on the Iberian peninsula
- Enables the loading of non-cranable trailers, i.e. most of the trailer fleet
- Implements a high-performance logistics system that ensures easier, faster and safer loading operations
- Enables connections with other French and European terminals (Sète, Marseille, Italy, etc.)

This project will involve Brittany Ferries building a railway terminal in Mouguerre (Greater Bayonne), setting up a 950 km long train route between Mouguerre and Cherbourg, and operating a two-way shuttle service with a transport capacity of 42 trailers in each direction.

Construction of the Cherbourg terminal should start in 2023 after public consultation, which is scheduled to take place in 2022. Barring unexpected problems, it should go into service in 2024.

The route is expected to open shortly after. After the ramp-up period, it will be able to transport about 20,000 trailers every year to and from the port of Cherbourg, i.e. the same volume currently handled at Cherbourg for the UK market.

Ports of Normandy will be contributing €7m to this project, with financial backing from Normandy Regional Council, the Manche department and Cotentin agglomeration community. Europe is also providing €1.4m of funding for the project (included in the €7m).

About Ports of Normandy

Owner and administrator of the ports of Caen-Ouistreham, Cherbourg, and Dieppe, Ports of Normandy comprises: 6,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs (INSEE Study 2016) / €410m invested in Normandy (2007-2020) / 100 ha dedicated to Marine Renewable Energies and 2 forthcoming maintenance sites / 2 million cross-Channel passengers per year / 7 million tonnes of goods per year / Close to 60 cruise ship visits per year and more than 150,000 cruise passengers / 3,200 marina berths, a dry stack marina and 33,600 overnight stays / 1/3 of all fish (tonnage) landed in Normandy / comprehensive ship repair provision.

Ports of Normandy, an alliance between Normandy Council, the departments of Calvados, Manche and Seine-Maritime and the agglomeration communities of Caen-la-Mer, Le Cotentin and Dieppe-Maritime, at the service of economic development in the region. Learn more about Ports of Normandy at portsdenormandie.fr

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