the increasing value placed by customers on current issues affecting this vital sector for the rail freight easier to use and injecting more changing and rail

“Innovation IS underlines that Felixstowe is, quite simply, rail freight service out of the port (that’s King’s Cross and provides how many people know advantage of rail over road, then and where there is a need to ensure on time to miss the most important benefit of rail –

“It is all about network and infrastructure. daily demand for the new North Rail Terminal will set the new will bring increased capability to the port –

“...will continue in key areas of the supply groups. Of course, as we said, trucking they can compete with road haulage and ultimately aim of making rail economical for the operators, so

Network Rail’s Strategic Freight Network modal share ,” says Paul Wallace. “We example, we offer half a dozen trains from

Putting in 1.1 km of rail lines might sound like a

The terminal is equipped with a • The only UK port with such an development within the UK port sector.”

...bypass the yard and

freight revolution, with bigger containers now being travel through Nuneaton station without affecting

...Guests were transported back

OPENING PERfOR-

...to facilitate that. Carbon may be a secondary

...accommodate trains of up to 35-wagons length.

...improve the port’s carbon footprint but will also help us

...cranes (RTGs).

...engines. The port’s Vehicle Booking System has also

switching to cleaner fuels and by using cleaner burning

...accommodations for train drivers, space and facilities for train drivers,

or using long lengths of track for

eliminates the need for reversing any other track, ready to depart with

...which was putting in 700 piles to support the heavy

...construction experts were handed

...piles – each 450 mm in diameter – are configured

...underground – it’s the part no one sees.

...a tremendous amount of work goes into what happens

...loading on crane rails at the terminal.

...the relentlessly cold weather in the first months of 2013.

...in service quality, innovation, customer

...inland destinations with 10 services per day

...not only reliable, but also frequent. Working

...cruise operators such as MSC Cruises choose to

...longest yet at Harwich International Port, running

...to be even more opulent and magnificent than its

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...importers to the next level is really encouraging,
The joint announcement of the formation of P3 by Maersk, MSC and CMA in June has taken the industry by surprise. With the increasing focus being placed by our customers on a continued drive for efficiency through the deployment of larger vessels, consolidation, the combining of services and forming alliances; terminal operators need to continue to evolve and adapt to provide the level of services demanded by our customers.

At Felixstowe our aim, as always, is to provide the best range of services for our customers. In striving to achieve this, we can lay claim to a number of ‘firsts’ since the 1960s, when we became the UK’s first container port. We continue to lead the way with the opening of Berths 8&9, making us the first terminal in the UK to handle the largest container vessels afloat and, in recent weeks, commencing operations at our new North Rail Terminal.

Our new rail terminal is the first of its kind, designed to handle trains 35 wagons long. The introduction of the 30th daily rail service from Felixstowe offers a range and frequency of services beyond rival. Collectively, this will provide the capacity to double the number of containers we can transport by rail. This new service to Doncaster brings us to a total of nine trains a day now serving Yorkshire terminals from Felixstowe.

Government investment in rail continues to be a priority, reducing congestion on the road networks, and enhancing environmental performance. 50% of all containers moving between Felixstowe and the Yorkshire – Humberside area are now transported by rail, saving over 2.5 million HGV road miles every year. The proportion of goods moving to the West Midlands and the North West is even greater, with over half of all containers moving by rail to two of the most economically important regions in the UK.

In giving evidence to the Parliamentary Transport Select Committee recently, I welcomed the announcement by the Government to commence work on the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon by 2016. However, I also urged the Government to give priority to further upgrade in the rail infrastructure of the UK. The benefits of rail freight are well known, and recognised by consumers and shippers, as well as the Government. The Port of Felixstowe offers greater scope to achieve these benefits than any other port in the UK.

CLEMENCE CHENG
Chief Executive Officer
NEW NORTH RAIL TERMINAL OPENING DOUBLES RAIL CAPACITY

The Port of Felixstowe’s new North Rail Terminal was officially opened in a spectacular ceremony attended by His Royal Highness The Duke of York, KG, local dignitaries and a large number of the port’s customers.

Commenting on the new terminal, Clemence Cheng, Chief Executive Officer of Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited, owner of the Port of Felixstowe, said:

“Rail is becoming the transport mode of choice for an increasing number of shipping lines, forwarders and shippers to move their goods to and from ports. It provides cost, environmental and reliability benefits for many customers. The Port of Felixstowe offers more rail services, to more destinations, more often than any other UK port.”

Speaking at the ceremony, the Duke of York said:

“Coming here today and seeing how Felixstowe is taking the challenge of delivering goods and services for British exporters and British importers to the next level is really encouraging, and I would wish not just to congratulate you on so far, but also encourage you to continue the good work and investment you have committed to the United Kingdom.”

Stephen Hammond, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport, said:

“Felixstowe has long been at the forefront of efforts to promote the use of rail for container freight and thus to reduce congestion and environmental impact from HGVs.

“The investment in this terminal will also complement Network Rail’s own investment in the Strategic Freight Network, which the Department for Transport is supporting.”

The £40 million investment in the new rail terminal is part of a scheme to increase capacity at the Port of Felixstowe that includes the new Berths 8&9, opened in November 2011.

The new rail terminal, co-financed by the European Union Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) programme, allows the port to accommodate trains of up to 35-wagons length. 10 kilometres of new track has been laid for the terminal which provides nine additional tracks, making a total of 20 tracks on the port – more than King’s Cross station - and it has the only traverser at a UK intermodal terminal.

Pictures of the opening ceremony can be seen at pages 8 & 9.
CHINESE AMBASSADOR VISITS PORT OF BRITAIN

His Excellency Liu Xiaoming, Ambassador to the United Kingdom from the People’s Republic of China, has visited the Port of Felixstowe, the Port of Britain.

During his visit, the Ambassador met with the port’s senior management and enjoyed a tour of the state-of-the-art facilities at the UK’s largest container port. The visit was also attended by Caroline Wilson, British Consul General to Hong Kong.

As well as being the largest port in the country, Felixstowe is also the most important port for trade with China, and the UK port of call for China’s two main container shipping lines, Cosco Container Lines and China Shipping Container Line.

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

“It is a great honour for us to welcome His Excellency Ambassador Liu and the Consul General to the Port of Felixstowe. China is the major source of container traffic moving through Felixstowe and accounts for over 40% of all container movements. We were delighted to have the opportunity to show them the latest investments we are making, including our third rail terminal and the new Berths 8&9, the only berths in the UK able to accommodate the next generation of giant containerships.”

Ambassador Liu said:

“It is a pleasure to visit the Port of Felixstowe, the UK’s most important port of trade with China. I am truly impressed by its top-notch facilities and amazing container handling efficiency. Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited has demonstrated great far-sightedness in choosing to invest here and making it the largest container port in this nation.”

GREENER CRANES FOR FELIXSTOWE

The Port of Felixstowe is taking further steps to reduce its carbon footprint and improve air quality with the purchase of its first electric Rubber-Tyred-Gantry cranes (RTGs).

Commenting on the new machines, Andrew Harston, Port Development Director and Chair of the port’s Environment Committee, said:

“We are fully committed to reducing the impact of our operations on the environment. The purchase of these new RTGs is the latest stage in a programme of measures that has seen carbon emissions at the port reduce by 12.5% since 2007 and sets us on the way to achieving a target of 30% reduction by 2017.

“These new, greener machines will not only help improve the port’s carbon footprint but will also help us improve air quality still further. Nitrogen Dioxide levels at the port have reduced by a third since 2007 and with no exhaust gas emissions the electric RTGs will contribute significantly to further improvements.”

Improvements in air quality at the port have been achieved by reducing the amount of fuel used, switching to cleaner fuels and by using cleaner burning engines. The port’s Vehicle Booking System has also meant less congestion around the port helping further to improve air quality and reduce the port’s impact on the local environment.
HARWICH CRUISE SEASON BOOSTED BY THE ARRIVAL OF THE MSC MAGNIFICA

The new cruise season at Harwich International Port has been boosted by the maiden call of MSC Cruises’ the MSC Magnifica. The Magnifica is one of the first calls of what is a busy 2013 season for Harwich International Port.

MSC vessels are a regular sight in Harwich Haven, although most of the time they are container ships heading for the Port of Felixstowe. MSC Cruises returned to the Essex port in 2012 with two calls of the MSC Lirica. The MSC Magnifica will return again in May, both times arriving from Newcastle and departing for St Peters Port.

Commenting on the call, Paul Davey, Head of Corporate Affairs at Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited, said:

“Harwich has established itself as one of the major UK ports for cruise and ferry tourism. It enjoys excellent transport links to Cambridge and London, as well as convenient access to Constable Country and historic Harwich, giving an excellent range of trips for visitors. Harwich International Port has made significant investment in recent years and offers excellent passenger facilities and service, and it is testament to this that major cruise operators such as MSC Cruises choose to use us, and return to us, year after year.”

The Magnifica is the latest in the MSC Cruises ‘Musica-class’ luxury cruise ships and promises to be even more opulent and magnificent than its predecessors.

The ship offers its 2,800 passengers a true luxury experience with a choice of 2 restaurants, 17 bars/lounges, a 1,240 seat royal theatre, futuristic disco, casino, and 3 swimming pools.

The 2013 cruise season will be the busiest and longest yet at Harwich International Port, running from April through to December. With 57 cruise calls, 12 of which will be transit calls, the Essex port is ready and waiting to welcome passengers from across the globe.

NEW VISITOR CENTRE HANDED OVER

The building for a new Visitors’ Centre and Café has been formally handed over by the Port of Felixstowe to Suffolk Coastal District Council.

Located on a newly extended part of the John Bradfield Viewing Area at Landguard, the site had previously been part of the Landguard Container terminal. The land and building have been provided by the port to improve public amenities at the ever-popular Viewing Area from where visitors can see the ships entering and leaving Harwich Harbour.

Commenting at the Handover ceremony, Clemence Cheng said:

“We are delighted to present Suffolk Coastal District Council with the keys to this impressive new building. The original Viewing Area has been a great success since it was donated by Hutchison Ports in 1992. The new building improves the facilities available to the public with a new café, amenity space and a sheltered area from which to view the port and the ships that arrive here.”

The area around the Viewing Area is managed by Landguard Partnership. The partnership includes a number of local bodies and is largely funded by the port to manage and maintain an important public area.
PORT OF FELIXSTOWE IS OFFICIALLY THE BEST CONTAINER TERMINAL IN EUROPE

The Port of Felixstowe has received the prestigious ‘Best Container Terminal in Europe’ Award at the 27th Annual Asian Freight & Supply Chain Awards (the AFSCAs). The award was presented to the Port at a glittering ceremony held in Beijing.

The prestigious AFSCA awards honour the respective winning organizations for demonstrating leadership as well as consistency in service quality, innovation, customer relationship management and reliability. The award to the Port of Felixstowe is in recognition of the high quality of service and levels of productivity achieved at the UK’s largest container port.

Commenting on the award, Stephen Abraham, Chief Operating Officer of the Port of Felixstowe, said:

“We are very pleased to receive this award in recognition of our achievements. This would not have been possible without the strong support of our customers and the relentless pursuit of operational excellence and customer service by our workforce. Whilst this award recognises our achievements to date, we will continue to improve on the level of customer service that has made Port of Felixstowe the Port of Britain. With our excellent location and a range of inland transport options by road, rail and short-sea shipping, that cannot be matched, we continue to offer importers and exporters the quickest, cheapest and most efficient way of moving cargo into, and out of, the UK.”

Asia is the largest trading partner for the Port of Felixstowe and the port is continuing to invest in new facilities that reinforce its position as the Port of Britain. New Berths 8&9, the only berths in the country capable of handling the next generation of ultra-large container ships, opened in late 2011 and the Port’s third rail terminal is due to open in June. The new North Rail Terminal will double rail capacity at what is already the country’s largest intermodal rail facility.

30TH DAILY TRAIN FROM FELIXSTOWE

Rail services from the Port of Felixstowe, already the best connected port in Britain, have just got better with the start of the 30th daily service from the UK’s largest container port.

The new service, operated by Freightliner, provides an additional daily connection to Doncaster. The port now serves 18 different inland destinations with 10 services per day to the North-West, 9 to Yorkshire and 7 to the Midlands.

Commenting on the new service, Paul Wallace, Commercial Director of Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited, said:

“The range of destinations and frequency of services by rail from Felixstowe sets it apart from other container ports in the UK. To be a truly viable choice for shippers rail needs to be not only reliable, but also frequent. Working with Freightliner, GB Railfreight and DB Schenker we are able to offer shipping lines, forwarders and consignees a range of options unrivalled anywhere else.

“Last year we moved over 700,000 TEU by rail which represents over 100 million road miles saved and a massive reduction in carbon emissions. The 30th train will increase those savings still further helping to make Felixstowe the best port for the environment.”

The Port of Felixstowe has 3 rail terminals. The South, Central and new North terminals. Rail throughput at the port has doubled since 2002.
The Port of Felixstowe formally opened its new North Rail Terminal on the 6th June 2013. The ceremony was officiated by His Royal Highness The Duke of York, KG and attended by 200 guests including important customers of the port. The guests were transported back to Victorian England when Colonel Tomline first formed the Felixstowe Railway and Pier Company, then brought dramatically back to the present by the Titan robot amidst roller skaters and spectacular acrobatic acts suspended from the new terminal’s state-of-the-art rail mounted gantry cranes. The ceremony came to an explosive end with guests treated to a dazzling pyrotechnics display from atop a loco running along the tracks.
MORE TRAINS TO TAKE THE STRAIN
Felixstowe is, of course, the UK’s largest and busiest container port by far – but how many people know that it would be the UK’s third largest container port based on its rail operations alone? Felixstowe has more rail tracks than King’s Cross and provides multiple connections every day, meeting the needs of importers and exporters alike – in short, Felixstowe’s rail links play a crucial role in hundreds of cost-effective, efficient and flexible supply chain solutions.

The opening of the new North Rail Terminal will enable the introduction of a 30th daily rail freight service out of the port (that’s 60 services if you count both ways) and underlines that Felixstowe is, quite simply, unrivalled for its rail offering.

“Containers are like commuters; there is daily demand for the most direct and cost-effective routes,” says Paul Wallace, Hutchison Ports UK Commercial Director. “It is all about network and infrastructure. Daily rail services link Felixstowe to hubs and terminals with the proximity to serve all of the major conurbations, in the Midlands, North West, North East and Scotland.”

It’s tempting to assume that the major driver behind increased rail usage is the ‘green’ agenda. But that, says Mr Wallace, would be to miss the most important benefit of rail – the opportunity to save substantial amounts of real money.

“Except in cases of special equipment and reeferst, for example, most mature supply chains do not have trucks from southern ports connecting to northern/midlands warehouses and so, recent industry comparisons over mileage advantages from respective seaports are largely irrelevant. Trucks are now best employed on shorter journeys, such as the ‘final leg’ of a rail move and where there is a need to ensure on time delivery. However, if looking to quantify the advantage of rail over road, then

Containers are like commuters; there is daily demand for the most direct and cost-effective routes”
we have to get freight off the roads and on to rail, which can move so many more containers.”
Felixstowe, says Paul Wallace, is: “development within the UK port sector.” ahead and very much leading market and invest in recessionary times, we are and shareholder backing to move ahead because we have had the confidence Terminal in very uncertain economic times.

8&9) and also build the new North Rail to build additional quay length (Berths build capacity. We are the first operator ensure supply chains are optimized and will continue to work with customers to modal share,” says Paul Wallace. “We “And we are committed to increase that leadership.

vital factor in the port’s continued market container imports and exports and rail is a example, we offer half a dozen trains from Manchester every day. As I said before, it is like commuters – you have to have that frequency there.”

PERCENTAGE POINTS
Felixstowe handles about 42% of the UK’s container imports and exports and rail is a vital factor in the port’s continued market leadership.

At present around 30% of containers are moving to and from the port by rail. “And we are committed to increase that modal share,” says Paul Wallace. “We will continue to work with customers to ensure supply chains are optimized and where appropriate we shall continue to build capacity. We are the first operator to build additional quay length (Berths 88&9) and also build the new North Rail Terminal in very uncertain economic times. But because we have had the confidence and shareholder backing to move ahead and invest in recessionary times, we are ahead and very much leading market development within the UK port sector.”

Felixstowe, says Paul Wallace, is:
• The only UK port able to offer multiple mega-vessel exchanges;
• The first UK port to offer a rail terminal with 30+ wagon train capacity;
• The only UK port with such an extraordinary scope of destinations and frequency of rail links – built up over years, combining complementary volumes from all of the major carriers.

Rail freight services at Felixstowe are presently offered by Freightliner, GB Railfreight and DB Schenker, HPUK is keen to see the development of more rail paths and also to encourage additional operators to enhance rail additional solutions out of the port.

At present we support daily connections to and from Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Cleveland, Birmingham, Doncaster, Tilbury, Selby, Harns Hall, Wakefield, Ditton (Widnes), Birch Coppice, Scunthorpe and Bristol.

“There are plans to build additional rail terminals around the UK, while others are expanding the capacity of their rail hubs,” says Paul Wallace. “When new terminals come onstream we will, of course, be looking to serve them directly.

“Meanwhile, there is work ongoing in terms of upgrading the rail network, which could potentially enable us to double rail throughput. From our perspective, we have the capacity to serve more and more trains at the port as and when demand grows. We will keep investing. We are very keen and engaging with Network Rail and the rail operators.”

Taking the ‘green’ angle out for a moment, an interesting debate is, at what point, distance wise, does it become more cost-effective to use rail than road. Although the exact answer is variable, it’s generally accepted to be around 200 kilometres, says Paul Wallace. Increased frequency, and that distance could come down – for example, some trains might be able to do two round trips a day. But to give a specific, when moving a box between Felixstowe and Daventry, the cost would be less by rail from Felixstowe than by road from any UK port.

“We are always looking with our rail partners to find innovative solutions to take out supply chain cost.”

Industry engagement is vital, he adds. “It is refreshing to see how much engagement there is from all the parties to make things work and migrate more and more business from the congested road networks on to rail. Most of our customers are committed to saving cost and carbon. Many are now actively working and measuring to reduce their carbon footprint. The challenge for us is to facilitate that. Carbon may be a secondary driver at the moment for certain businesses, because cost is the top issue, but carbon will still remain a huge agenda.”

THE NEW NORTH RAIL TERMINAL
The new North Rail Terminal represents a total €37 million investment, including a grant of €5 million from the European Union. It will increase Felixstowe’s annual container-to-rail capacity to 1.5 million teu and also brings another significant advantage – its ability to handle longer trains, hauling over 30 wagons each.

The new terminal positions Felixstowe to make the most of ongoing investments in the Felixstowe to Nuneaton (F2N) rail freight route.

“WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING WITH OUR RAIL PARTNERS TO FIND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO TAKE OUT SUPPLY CHAIN COST.”

FACTS AND FIGURES
• The terminal has more than 10 kilometres of rail tracks and is 730 metres long overall.
• Seven tracks run within the gauge of the rail-mounted gantry cranes, and two run-around tracks outside the cranes – making a total of nine tracks.
• The terminal is equipped with a traverser, saving time and space. Locos arriving at the terminal can be moved sideways to line up with any other track, ready to depart with a new set of wagons; the traverser eliminates the need for reversing or using long lengths of track for shunting, so the terminal can make very best use of the full length of tracks.
• A new amenity building will provide space and facilities for train drivers, the rail terminal operating team and rail operating companies.
• Two level crossing points have been built to Network Rail standards, a new footbridge to provide access for workshop and other employees (and offering an excellent viewing point!)”
we have the capacity to serve more and more trains at the port as and when demand grows.”
UPGRADING THE NETWORK

ALL THE RIGHT STEPS

Ipswich Chord, Ely Loops, Nuneaton North Chord … the uninitiated could be forgiven if they mistook Network Rail’s agenda for some sort of exotic ice dance.

But stay with us here, because these exotic ‘moves’ are indeed music to the ears of the rail freight industry, and together add up to a hugely significant boost for rail freight to and from the Port of Felixstowe.

Step by dramatic step, improvements to the crucial Felixstowe to Nuneaton (F2N) line have been – or are being – planned, worked on and completed. Each project helps step up capacity on F2N and its links to the West Coast and East Coast main lines.

The importance of F2N cannot be overstated. This cross-country rail route links Felixstowe with the main lines without going anywhere near London. Because the route entirely avoids the constraints of the congested commuter routes through the capital, it will allow substantial further growth of container rail transport to and from the port.

“Every few years the industry has new forecasts for intermodal rail freight and every time the forecast is updated, it goes up,” says Tim Cook, Network Rail’s programme manager for strategic freight projects. “We are constantly analysing and planning where we need to accommodate even more trains. Certainly as far as East Anglia is concerned, F2N is the most obvious – the newest forecasts are even talking of 60 trains or more per day, or 120 if you count both directions. Our planning has to take that into consideration.”

Network Rail’s Strategic Freight Network Programme has a very heavy focus on links to the Port of Felixstowe, “because that is one area where everyone thinks the big growth will be”, says Mr Cook. “What we aim to ensure is that all investments are discussed with freight operators and the wider industry. Everything we do is with the aim of making rail economical for the operators, so they can compete with road haulage and ultimately win more business. That is all aligned with the Government target to reduce road congestion and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.”

“/// We are constantly analysing and planning where we need to accommodate even more trains.”

NUNEATON NORTH CHORD

Towards the end of 2012, the unveiling of a plaque at Nuneaton may have seemed rather remote from Felixstowe. But it represented big news for the port, as it marked the completion of the

// 16 //
Nuneaton North Chord, a rail flyover which links F2N with the West Coast Main Line.

This 1.4 km stretch of rail allows freight trains to travel through Nuneaton station without affecting passenger services, and also means that 9 ft 6 in high-cube containers can be carried across the whole length of the route, instead of having to be moved via the congested North London Line. Network Rail’s freight director, Tim Robinson, pointed out at the Nuneaton ceremony: Britain relies on rail freight, which is one of the greenest methods of transporting goods.

“The new line will totally bypass the yard and save so much time,” says Tim Cook. “This will also allow a lot more trains to run directly to the Midlands, especially in conjunction with the new North Rail Terminal at the port.”

Putting in 1.1 km of rail lines might sound like a relatively modest undertaking, but the £59 million project includes widening the embankment carrying the Great Eastern Main Line, rebuilding and widening a bridge over Sproughton Road, Ipswich, building a completely new railway bridge across the River Gipping, constructing a new railway embankment on the south-eastern side of the river, and replacing an existing bridge over the Gipping.

“We are on site now and the project is progressing towards completion in March 2014,” says Mr Cook. “Preparation work has started for the new bridge, including piling. But a really major part of the job is the renewal of the existing bridge over the river. This will be done over Christmas (2013); the bridge will be built and assembled next to the final site, ready for installation, so that the railway to the port will be closed for only a few days for this work to be completed.”

ELY LOOPS

The Ely Loops project will be the ‘last big piece of the F2N puzzle in East Anglia’, according to Tim Cook. The bottleneck here is a single line section of track from Ely to Soham; the loops will essentially provide additional track and also sidings where freight trains can pull in to make way for passenger trains, if needed. However, following revision of the plans, the ‘loops’ project will now be done at the same time as a full doubling of the line.

“The Ely Loops work is expected to be within our Control Period 5 investment programme and will be done alongside doubling of the line,” says Mr Cook.

Network Rail’s funding is agreed with the Government and allocated in five-year cycles; Control Period 5 runs between April 2014 and March 2019. “At the moment, we expect that the Ely investment will be about midway through that period. We will do the loops and full doubling together, a project that involves four to five miles of doubling,” he says.

“When we have finished the Ipswich and Ely projects, the impact on the F2N route will be dramatic. And we are continuing to look at other options to deliver additional train paths cost-effectively.”

Network Rail has stated its target of increasing capacity on the Felixstowe to Nuneaton route to at least 56 trains per day in each direction by 2030. As well as the headline projects, other work includes signalling remodelling.

“The Strategic Freight Network consists of a series of linked schemes which improve the performance, economic efficiency and capacity of freight on rail,” said Network Rail’s Tim Robinson recently. By providing funding, the Government had demonstrated its commitment to modal shift, he added.

“Rail’s environmental benefits have long been acknowledged but it is important to recognise its contribution to the economy. Rail freight helps economic growth through decongesting the highway network and providing a productive and high-performing competitive option for logistic operations in Britain.”

Ipswich Chord

The opening of the Ipswich Chord in 2014 will make a huge difference to freight trains heading to Nuneaton from the Port of Felixstowe.

A new 1.4 km stretch of track is being built to the north of the Ipswich Goods Yard, to link the Great Eastern Main Line and the East Suffolk branch line. At present, freight trains heading to the Midlands but looking to avoid London have to go into the goods yard and change direction, which can add up to an hour to the journey.

“Transport minister Simon Burns, also at the ceremony, said: “The Chord unlocks a real rail freight revolution, with bigger containers now being taken straight from the Port of Felixstowe and transported by rail directly to the West Midlands and beyond.”

Network Rail has stated its target of increasing capacity on the Felixstowe to Nuneaton route to at least 56 trains per day in each direction by 2030. As well as the headline projects, other work includes signalling remodelling.

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“Rail’s environmental benefits have long been acknowledged but it is important to recognise its contribution to the economy. Rail freight helps economic growth through decongesting the highway network and providing a productive and high-performing competitive option for logistic operations in Britain.”
PRECISION PERFORMANCE

THE BUILDING OF THE NEW NORTH RAIL TERMINAL
logistics, precision, planning ... and sheer determination to carry on working through those bitingly cold winter months; for all those involved, the completion of Felixstowe’s new North Rail Terminal is certainly an achievement to look back on with pride.

The designers, planners and construction experts were handed a real challenge in terms of timescale, and they definitely delivered.

Richard Lee, Hutchison Ports UK Senior Project Manager, was involved in the project from the tender negotiations and start of construction. “It would be easy to think it is just two rails, sleepers and a few clips to hold it in place, but there is so much more to it than that,” he says. “The challenge for me is that a lot of my work tends to focus on quay walls and deep berths and all that goes with heavy marine work. The new North Rail Terminal project is land-based, of course, and has required some entirely different disciplines, not to mention an entirely new vocabulary!”

The site on which the terminal was to be built was already fairly level, open ground, but beyond that there were plenty of challenges, not the least of which was putting in 700 piles to support the heavy loading on crane rails at the terminal.

Bill Andrew, of consultants Royal Haskoning DHV, acted as employer’s representative on site, overseeing the construction project on behalf of HPUK.

“We have had three people on site full-time for more than a year, and also had support from colleagues in head office and other offices on technical details,” he says.

At the early stages of the project, Royal Haskoning reviewed all the engineering aspects of HPUK’s preferred plans – a task that included checking track alignments and ensuring that all details of the concept were practical and achievable. As the project progressed, Royal Haskoning was responsible for reviewing the detailed design submissions and calculations from contractor VolkerFitzpatrick, and on site supervision.

“This was a challenging project in terms of timescale,” says Mr Andrew. “Putting down the actual tracks is the bit people think of – but in many ways, that is the easy part. We had to consider drainage works, power and communication cables, water mains, etc.; all underground.”

Philip Fouché, Project Manager for VolkerFitzpatrick, had overall responsibility for delivery of the project, and was on site from January 2012.

“I showed my son some pictures of the site once it was almost finished, and he said: ‘There is not much to it, then!’ For anyone looking at the finished terminal, all they see are the rails on top. But in a project like this, a tremendous amount of work goes into what happens underground – it’s the part no one sees.

“In the early days, there was a lot of ground investigation, with bore holes and soil sampling to understand the strata; this was fed into the pile design and helped us determine how long we needed to allow the ground to consolidate. We spent almost a year on drainage, foundations and other underground work.”

For sheer drama in figures, the piling was immense. The gantry cranes run along rails, and those rails are supported by concrete beams on piles. A total of 780 piles, average length 24.7 metres each, were required – for the crane rails and to support the rails on which the traverser sits. The traverser is like a bridge that moves sideways – it will be used to transfer locos between tracks at the far end of the terminal.

The piles were installed by a process called ‘continuous flight auger’, a quieter process than the more usual hammering of steel piles. In CFA piling, an auger, which is like a huge drill, is screwed into the ground, down to the bedrock. Concrete is injected under pressure to fill the hole left as the auger is extracted, and reinforcing rods are then pushed into the concrete-filled hole.

“This is a sophisticated process that requires clear logistics and real precision,” says Bill Andrew. “You must have the concrete ready before drilling the hole; the concrete must be pumped at the right pressure; everything is constantly monitored and the piles are all tested as you go along. On occasions we had three piling rigs in operation simultaneously.”

The piles – each 450 mm in diameter – are configured in pairs, precisely installed with 2 metres spacing from centre to centre. However, the layout had to be adapted in places where existing services, including high-voltage cables, drainage and high-pressure water mains crossed the site, says Philip Fouché.

Perhaps one of the biggest challenges to overcome was the relentlessly cold weather in the first months of 2013.

“The cold weather inevitably slowed things down,” says Mr Andrew. “At one point it was so cold we had to bring materials such as paint and mortar indoors to warm them before using them.”

Philip Fouché adds: “We had 55,000 sq m of concrete paving to install. To do that, you need a temperature of 3°C or above – anything below 3° and we had to stop operations.”

But the challenges were met, and confirmation of a job completed and ready for the scheduled start of operations came in mid May, with the commissioning of a new signalling panel that will be used by HPUK’s own terminal team to control trains in and out of the new facility. Beyond that, says Richard Lee, it really has been a case of the finishing touches to a job well done.

The opening of the new North Rail Terminal more than doubles the Port of Felixstowe’s rail capacity at a time when rail freight services are more in demand than ever before.
Although rail freight companies are often portrayed as the laggards of the intermodal supply chain, it is time to recognise that innovation leadership and engagement with supply chain partners are the key to changing this sector for the better.

Slow to innovate and difficult for potential customers to deal with, rail freight has been unable to gain market share from road freight in recent years, despite rising fuel prices and the increasing value placed by customers on reducing carbon emissions.

One of the main reasons for this is an apparent reluctance on the part of rail freight operators to challenge existing structures, innovate with business partners and invest in new technology. By contrast, the Port of Felixstowe’s recent investment in a brand new rail terminal is an excellent example of how other parts of the intermodal supply chain have been willing to innovate and invest in order to improve their service. The intermodal transport market is changing and rail freight operators need to change with it.

This comparative lack of dynamism can also be linked to the competitive environment of the industry. Trucking companies - and increasingly ports - operate in a highly competitive environment, yet even after the opening up of the UK railways, intermodal rail freight is the one sector that has remained stubbornly resistant to competition.

At DB Schenker Rail UK, we believe that innovation is essential for improving the service that we offer to our customers, making rail freight easier to use and injecting more competition into the rail freight market. We are committed to this. Last year, we restructured our intermodal network and are now regularly achieving levels of utilisation of 90-95%.

In 2012, we also hosted the industry’s first Intermodal Port Conference, bringing together over 100 key stakeholders to meet and discuss current issues affecting this vital sector for the UK economy. We are now looking forward to the 2013 conference, which will take place in Brighton in September. And we are following words with actions, investing £4.5M in a new state-of-the-art order management and planning system that will be implemented later this year, making it quicker and far easier for customers to place and track their orders.

Of course, we hope this will help us to win new business, but by making rail freight easier to use and more competitive, it is also good for our customers and for the whole industry. The time is right for intermodal rail freight to move on from market structures and antiquated technology that have changed little since privatisation, and start to offer customers a better service and a real choice.

BY CARSTEN HINNE, MANAGING DIRECTOR LOGISTICS, DB SCHENKER RAIL UK
“INNOVATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR IMPROVING OUR SERVICE”
You might not need convincing about Mediterranean Shipping Company’s commitment to rail – but, just in case, a few statistics should do it.

Last year, we eliminated the equivalent of 21 million truck miles from Britain’s roads, thanks to the high proportion of containers we moved to and from the Port of Felixstowe by train rather than truck.

More than 40% of MSC’s loaded containers are moved through the port by rail – way ahead of the industry average of 27%. And we have an average train utilisation of 90%. That’s very high, and it’s a performance we work hard on.

For us, the opening of the new North Rail Terminal is really positive news. This new facility will bring increased capability to the port – allowing for more trains each day and, equally important, allowing increased rail moves by handling longer trains.

Modern, faster and more reliable equipment at the new North Rail Terminal will set the new standard for port rail terminal operations, further reducing commercial risk and associated costs in our own and our customers’ businesses.

MSC has been a major user of the Port of Felixstowe for 29 years, and has operated contract rail services to and from the port for 11 years. Today, we are running eight dedicated ‘block’ rail services a day, across three locations, and we add spot traffic on to other services and to other destinations.

In all, we move containers by rail to a total of 15 inland locations through the UK.

So what are MSC’s main ‘rail objectives’? First, it is increased customer service delivery, working with customers to ensure the boxes are where they are needed – not just in time, but well in time. Second, we work hard to reduce the risk of the inland move, and our success rate is 99.9%.

Moving containers by rail reduces road and port congestion – for example, more than 90% of the boxes we send by train to and from Birmingham (Hams Hall) are delivered or collected within 50 miles of the railhead. Even better, rail allows us to move containers direct to customers, where their warehouses are on the same site as the railhead. We do this in Birmingham and Selby, which effectively gives customers a port-centric solution but 150 miles inland, to complement multichannel supply chains.

We also believe that the EcoFret wagons, designed specifically to carry 40-ft containers, will further increase utilisation levels and bring more benefits to our customers, increasing the catchment area from the rail hubs we serve.

Making rail a success demands real teamwork by all concerned. We work closely with the Port of Felixstowe in this, providing advance information on load plans early enough to ensure maximum utilisation of each train.

At MSC we have invested in high-quality people to support the commercial and specialist logistics aspects of rail freight. Efficient rail freight operations demand complex planning – from having the right inland terminal agreements in place, to having the right number of trucks waiting at the rail hub for the final leg of the container’s journey. Alongside that, flexibility and a rapid response to the customers’ changing needs are just as important.

The choice, capacity and capability provided by Felixstowe’s rail operations play a vital role in that.
“MOVING CONTAINERS BY RAIL REDUCES ROAD AND PORT CONGESTION”
John Smith has worked in the rail industry for over 25 years.

He has led GB Railfreight from its creation in 1999, turning it into an award winning, multi-million pound business.

Under John’s leadership the company has established a reputation for reliability, for quality customer service and for innovation.

Prior to becoming managing director of GB Railfreight, John was deputy managing director of Anglia Railways.

An engineer, John’s background is in manufacturing and rolling stock maintenance. He has held senior positions at York, Longsight near Manchester, and at Bounds Green, Wembley and Willesden in London.

During John’s time as MD GB Railfreight have won Rail Business of the Year three times at the Rail Business Awards; the Freight Achievement Award three times at the National Rail Awards and the Logistics Provider of the Year at the McCloskey’s Coal UK Awards, amongst numerous other accolades.

Within the company John is well known for his ‘hands-on’ management style and regularly meets with his 400-plus staff, at all levels within the organisation, despite also maintaining an incredibly busy diary.
**Q&A**

**Q** Your role within your company:

**A** My role is to lead the company ensuring the continued growth of the business.

**Q** Biggest challenge of your job:

**A** The biggest challenge of my job is getting to see everyone in the business on a regular basis. With folk based from Fort William to Cardiff it is a huge and time consuming exercise to plan visits to all our depots. This said, it is the most important part of what I do. Without the committed individuals based throughout the UK who graft day in day out GBRf would be nothing.

**Q** Most satisfying about your job:

**A** The most satisfying part of my work is meeting people. Whether employees, customers or suppliers every individual is different. I find it fascinating finding out what makes people tick.

**Q** What do you like best about working in the rail industry:

**A** Having started my career as a fitter making trains, I never in my wildest dreams dreamt that I would one day run a railfreight business. I have a passion for our industry and those that work in it. It’s never dull, always a challenge and railway people are some of the most committed you’ll meet. Quite simply there is no better job that I’d want to do.

**Q** Single most satisfying achievement?:

**A** Starting GBRf has to be the most satisfying achievement of my career. The company has grown from just a couple of people (in a pub discussing the chances of a railfreight business ever getting off the ground) to employing 500 and turning over £100m in 12 years. I sometimes look back and wonder how it all happened (and where the time went).

**A WEEK IN THE LIFE...**

**05:45**

My day begins, then I normally drive to a nearby rail station for a journey to either London (for a day in the office), the North to meet a Customer or further afield to visit some of our train crew.

**MONDAY**

The morning is normally spent reviewing the week ahead with other Directors.

**TUESDAY**

Today is often more local to where I live as I always pick the kids up from school.

**WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY**

I am usually always away from home in the evening socialising with customers or employees.

Finally, I always try and ensure I travel on at least one of our services once a week. You can’t beat kicking the tyres.

**MINI CV**

I started work as an apprentice in York carriage works in 1977. Having qualified I migrated around the country in various jobs for British Railways these included:

- York Locomotive, Maintenance Depot on the shop floor
- Doncaster Loco Works, on the shop floor
- Bounds Green London, maintaining High Speed Trains
- Crewe, working on Overhead Line electrification equipment
- Manchester Longsight Depot as a Shift Production Manager
- Derby as a Project Engineer and then a Project Manager for Inter City
- Birmingham as Fleet Engineer for the Cross Country part of Inter City
- London (again) in charge of all maintenance of coaching stock and locomotives operating from Euston as well as the train crew driving them.
- Ipswich as Production Director of Anglia Railways at the time of privatisation (1995). Which I continued with until setting up GBRailfreight in 1999.

Since then I’ve had the same job title (MD GBRf) but a role that has changed quite dramatically over the years.

Going forward I’m not stopping until GBRf becomes the biggest and best in the industry.
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New North rail terminal opening: Inner seal rail capacity
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Greener cranes for Felixstowe
Harwich cruise season boosted by the arrival of the MSC Magnifica
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More trains to take the strain
Upgrading the network
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