Dryport evaluation per work package

WP 4 Physical terminal planning

From the construction of an award-winning 'green' coffee distribution centre at Zeebrugge to a unique hub-and-spoke timber terminal established at Falköping, the Dryport project has seen some excellent examples of intelligent logistics at work.

The essential feature of this work package is that it focuses on activities taking place at specific sites in the partners' areas, and hence stimulates the exchange of ideas and experience between partners.

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The ongoing development of a multimodal 120-hectare Maritime Logistics Zone (MLZ) has been a key focus for Dryport partner Zeebrugge. The zone, next to the existing port operational area, is linked by road, rail, sea and inland waterway, including to a number of inland import hubs. It is supplied with a high level of 'green' energy through solar and wind power projects and includes Efico's €30 million carbon-neutral coffee import centre, which started in 2010.

All of this ties in with the port's commitment to environmental protection and reducing its overall carbon footprint – and to its membership of Dryport.

The Zeebrugge partner recognised that in a changing world, it is vital to look at new ideas together; and perhaps in difficult times it is even more important to have a network of people you can trust and with whom you can share opinions.

The other Dryport partners have been able to learn from Zeebrugge's research and experience in developing the MLZ. The port authority did a great deal of study work in preparation for the project and has also been considering developing another project. However, while there is huge interest in the logistics area, care has been taken to ensure that only maritime-related activities are located there – the aim being a diversification of port sectors.

The port authority built a bridge between the Maritime Logistics Zone and the port area to enable shorter and more efficient movements of cargo between the import and distribution areas. There is also is a tight cooperation between the port and the VOKA Chamber of Commerce West Flanders as it promotes the importance of a well-functioning port and hinterland connections among its members.

The planning for better rail connections has continued at Zeebrugge, where discussions included how to construct tracks to allow the movement of more freight traffic while at the same time ensuring that villages located along the railway still have access to both sides of the track. An increase in the number of goods trains implies more noise and longer waiting times at crossings. Discussions about new inland waterway access are ongoing.

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The right location, excellent connections, carefully planned layout and targeted marketing – all of these are key factors if the design and development of a Dryport is ultimately to be successful, partners heard at a special workshop held in Sweden in spring 2010.

Site assessment, physical planning and the marketing of a dryport were discussed at the workshop, which was hosted by Dryport's lead partner, the Region Västra Götaland.

The workshop was held around the Skaraborg Logistics Centre, which has been created and developed at Falköping by the municipality itself in cooperation with the regional administration of Västra Götaland and different departments within Trafikverket (Swedish transport Administration).

The Swedish partners shared their experience in the development of the logistics centre and its strategy for developing the site further. All of the partners put forward suggestions from their own experience and investigations as to how best a Dryport can be designed.

In May 2011, the project reached a landmark moment with an official opening ceremony and seminar at the Skaraborg Logistics Centre.

The Stora Enso/Sydved's timber terminal was opened in the presence of over 100 guests from local and regional authorities, road and rail authorities, business and industry. The timber terminal was the first major establishment at the Skaraborg site to use the new rail link to the main railway between Gothenburg and Stockholm.

Skaraborg Logistics Centre could ultimately cover 70 hectares, and there is more land available for future expansion. The site is designed to serve as a dryport/railport for the Port of Gothenburg and other harbours.

At present, the site is being used for transport and storage of hard and softwood, salt, pellets, building materials and other cargoes. There are plans to launch a container shuttle link again to and from the Port of Gothenburg and this would bring substantial container volumes into the site. The site could play a major role in the Port of Gothenburg's RAILPORT concept, which enables the movement of 50% of containers to and from the port by rail – a remarkable achievement when compared to European norms.

Håkan Alexandersson, head of logistics at Stora Enso, was among the speakers at the seminar/ presentation before the opening ceremony. He described the rapid development of the terminal from green field site to working system.

The Falköping terminal was already saving Stora Enso about €1.7 million a year and reducing CO2 emissions by 6%, based on throughput of 300,000 tonnes of logs a year – there are plans to increase this, and also start the transport of biofuel from Falköping.

The municipality of Falköping has worked actively for a substantial period of time for the development of a Dryport pilot at Skaraborg. The development process has been in close collaboration with Gothenburg School of Business, Economics and Law at Gothenburg University (Handelshögskolan) and Chalmers University of Technology (Chalmers). Other major actors involved in have been the Swedish Road Authority and Swedish Rail Authority (recently amalgamated into one Traffic Authority), the Port of Gothenburg, Region Västra Götaland and local and regional businesses.

The vision for Skaraborg is of a full service and comprehensive logistics centre based on the intermodal road-rail terminal. As well as cargo handling and transhipments, the centre offers service, storage and competence development.

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In the Netherlands, the towns of Emmen and Coevorden are pursuing 'hub' ambitions as partners in the Dryport project. Located on the Dutch-German border, on the E233 highway linking Rotterdam and Hamburg, the two municipalities are looking to build on existing dryport operations and have campaigned to have the E233 designated as a TEN-T route and "Green Corridor".

The partners are promoting the rail links through the region as an alternative to the already congested Betuwe Line, and are proposing a Green Corridor where the use of biofuels, natural gas and electric-powered vehicles are promoted.

Planning for an upgraded and improved railway connection to the EMMTEC site in Emmen has been an important factor in the partners' Dryport activities – the funding is already in place for this work. The intention is to create a rail link that eliminates the need for extra shunting through the passenger station in Emmen, bypassing the town centre altogether.

Coevorden already has the Europark cross-border industrial site, with the Euroterminal accessible by road, rail and water. The partners want to expand and promote this operation and develop a complementary dryport at Emmen.

The partners commissioned consultants Ecorys to carry out an analysis of freight flows and the results of this study were presented at the end of 2009. The objective was to define in a precise way what level of ambition is realistic when considering future market developments, and what actions are needed to make the most of the potential. Emmen and Coevorden hosted a major workshop in October 2009, attended by 60 Dutch and German regional stakeholders, to verify the preliminary conclusions in the report.

Most participants at the workshop agreed that the region's position in intermodal transport could be strengthened if a link was created with Duisburg, the major European hub for container transport and the world's biggest inland port.

Cooperation with Stenden University, which offers expert knowledge on logistics, is an important contributing factor to Emmen/Coevorden's activities. The university introduced an international transport module, for which students presented papers in January 2010 as answers to questions left after the Ecorys investigation.

More recently, Emmen organised a Dryport congress in February 2012 – and got a full house.

More than 260 delegates, representing shippers, shipping lines, rail companies, terminal operators, consultants, logistics companies and local authorities, attended the congress, entitled 'A Smart Logistics Hub'; they heard about and discussed the opportunities the region can offer for greener and more efficient logistics, and how a developing dryport can support the giant ports of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, particularly providing a smooth route into Germany.

The congress organisers said a key message was that little marketing had been done by the region in the past, so that ports and others would often not even know where Emmen/Coevorden were. More

marketing and communication efforts will be made. Following the congress, stakeholders can see the potential, and understand what is being offered, including hinterland developments and opening up routes to new destinations. Political representatives of four Dutch border regions signed the GOLD declaration during the congress with the purpose to promote all the region's potentials for hinterland support. GOLD includes the provinces of Gelderland, Overijssel, Limburg and Drenthe.

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Dryport's partners in the northern Netherlands - the Port of Harlingen and the Province of Friesland, set up a unique action plan early on in the project. Harlingen Seaport was once the third largest port in the Netherlands and, while its activities may be dwarfed by Rotterdam and Amsterdam today, it has ambitious plans to increase its role in the country's shipping and logistics sector, with modal shift as the central focus.

Located on the Wadden Sea, just outside the IJsselmeer dam, Harlingen has plans for a major expansion seaward to help build the it's role as the Netherlands' 'northern gateway', with particular focus on links to Scandinavia and the Baltic.

The port is also looking inland, and a €2m project to deepen the lock access between Harlingen and the IJsselmeer is a key part of this. Harlingen wants to increase its activities as a hub for the country's two major ports; already linked by a regular container barge from Rotterdam, it is championing a plan for a twice-weekly barge service around the Ijsselmeer, to pick up and drop off containers that would otherwise be clogging up the roads between the region around Harlingen and Amsterdam/Rotterdam.

The concern is that if nothing is done, in a few years' time the Netherlands will be completely full of trucks and everybody will be sitting in traffic queues. Smarter thinking is needed – shippers must seek out opportunities to transport their cargo in a greener and more cost-efficient way.

Exporters in the area around Harlingen are routinely putting containers on to trucks to join the hard-pressed motorway network to the main ports but Harlingen believes that through a little bit of planning, they could save money and reduce their carbon footprint by choosing the barge option.

Harlingen hosted Dryport's annual meeting and a major conference in September 2009, where its ambitions were outlined by politicians and logistics specialists. Nearly 100 people from the transport sector, larger regional producers, gateway representatives and partners around the IJsselmeer attended the congress, which also attracted the attention of regional radio, television and press.

Harlingen has worked hard to promote the potential strengths of an IJsselmeer alliance and use of inland waterways as a viable and much-needed alternative mode of transport. The conference was a really positive starting point for the IJsselmeer alliance, in which authorities, organisations and the private sector from major towns around the lake collaborate in: lobbying to position the 'dryport opportunities' around the IJsselmeer; campaigning for improved infrastructure; developing new terminals and zoned transport routes; and the promotion of inland waterways.

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In the Haven Gateway, proposals for a dryport site have been the subject of much political and economic complication. Two sites are earmarked for future logistics use and in one case a High Court ruling was required to confirm that the site should be used for economic functions, not residential. The owner/developer went bankrupt, leading to complex ownership issues.

The Haven Gateway and Babergh District Council carried out a Ports and Logistics Employment Land Study. This was followed by a more detailed Employment Land Review, aiming to identify all employment land and its potential uses, thus eliminating from consideration sites not suitable for a dryport and showing identifying those sites that could be suitable.

After the evidence base of land studies, and in order to support the understanding of the ports and logistics sector (and specifically relating to dryport opportunities), an Economic Impact of Ports Study was completed. This demonstrated that the sector has a significant impact on the local economy over and above that which was previously identified.