Norsepower, the global market leader in wind propulsion, in collaboration with Stena Line, announce the arrival to Northern Ireland of Stena Connecta, the latest purpose-built RoRo freight vessel commissioned by Stena Line for the Irish Sea. The vessel is equipped with two 28m x 4m Norsepower Rotor Sails™, supporting reduced fuel consumption and lower CO_2 emissions on the Belfast–Heysham route.

January 20th 2026, Helsinki, Finland – Stena Connecta arrived at Belfast Harbour ahead of its planned commercial start on 23 January 2026. The vessel follows sister ship Stena Futura, which entered service on the same route in October 2025 and is also prepared for future rotor sail installation. Together, the two ‘New Max’ RoRo vessels will increase freight capacity on the Belfast–Heysham route by approximately 40%.

Designed for maximised freight efficiency, Stena Connecta offers 2,848 lane metres across its 147-metre length and features a multi-hybrid propulsion system enabling the use of batteries, biofuels and methanol. The addition of Norsepower Rotor Sails™ enables the vessel to harness wind energy as a zero-emission source of propulsion, delivering fuel savings of up to 9% on its Irish Sea operations.

“Heikki Pöntynen, CEO of Norsepower, said: ‘Stena Connecta is a strong example of how forward-looking vessel design can combine operational efficiency with tangible emissions reductions. By integrating Norsepower Rotor Sails™ alongside hybrid propulsion and alternative fuel readiness, Stena Line is demonstrating a practical, data-driven approach to decarbonising short-sea shipping. We are proud to support Stena Line and Stena RoRo in bringing scalable wind propulsion into everyday commercial operation on the Irish Sea.’”

Paul Grant, Stena Line Irish Sea North Trade Director, commented: “Our significant investment in Stena Connecta and Stena Futura, more than £100m, demonstrates our strong confidence in the continued growth of the Irish Sea region and our commitment to strengthening trade and connectivity links. These vessels were commissioned as a direct response to customer demand for increased freight capacity on the Belfast-Heysham route. Customer feedback on the recent introduction of Stena Futura has been extremely positive, and I have no doubt Stena Connecta will be equally well received across our customer base.”

Paul Grant added: “When operational both vessels will offer a choice of up to 24 sailings per week on the increasingly popular Belfast-Heysham service. We are particularly pleased to introduce two of Stena Line’s most advanced vessels to the Irish Sea region further enhancing Belfast’s significance as a key network business hub. These vessels represent the very latest in maritime technology and will not only play a crucial role in maintaining essential transport links in Ireland and the UK but also make a significant contribution to our sustainability goals of reducing CO_2 emissions by 30 percent by 2030.”

Wind-assisted propulsion is increasingly recognised as a key enabler for meeting tightening regional and international emissions regulations. By reducing fuel consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions without relying on fuel availability or infrastructure changes, Norsepower Rotor Sails™ provide shipowners and operators with an immediately deployable solution that complements alternative fuels and electrification strategies.

The installation of Norsepower Rotor Sails™ on Stena Connecta further reinforces the growing adoption of wind propulsion within the RoRo segment and highlights the role of hybrid, multi-technology solutions in accelerating maritime decarbonisation today.