

New crane to boost productivity at ABP's Port of Garston

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The UK's leading port operator is set to grow its business in Liverpool after installing the world's largest hydraulic crane (<http://www.cooperhandling.com/>) on the north bank of the River Mersey.

Associated British Ports (<http://www.abports.co.uk/>) (ABP) expects to increase productivity at the Port of Garston since the new crane's reach and capacity will enable the facility to handle a more diverse range of cargo and achieve faster turnaround times.

The decision to add a Mantsinen 200M crane to its equipment fleet reinforces ABP's commitment to invest in the port, which is now able to handle any vessel that can pass through the on-site lock.

The Port of Garston crane is one of five new equipment contracts, with a total value of £6million, signed by ABP and Cooper Specialised Handling, the UK's largest independent provider of port equipment and cargo handling solutions. This investment is part of ABP's wider £1billion improvement programme, which aims to support customers with innovative logistics solutions.

Weighing in at more than 280 tonnes, the Mantsinen 200M is the world's largest hydraulic crane. The Garston machine was built to meet the port's specific requirements and is the first to operate in the UK.

Carl Bevan, ABP's Divisional Port Manager at Garston, said: "We are expanding our operation at the Port of Garston and the new crane will play a key part in our development strategy, enabling us to derive key operating efficiencies while simultaneously opening up opportunities in new sectors. Ultimately, our aim is to offer greater flexibility to customers across the North West."

Around 500,000 tonnes of cargo pass through the 65-acre Garston facility each year, including metals, forest products and agribulks. Along with two steel coil stores totalling 2,500 sq m, one of which is adjacent to a deep-water discharge berth, the port has a bulk scrap metal export facility for short-sea and deep-sea shipments. The site also features 7,000 sq m of conventional covered storage and a dedicated import terminal for cement. For dry bulks the Port of Garston offers 10,000 sq m of common-user flat-stores and 6,000 sq m of segregated storage with HM Revenue & Customs duty-free approval.

Cooper's Managing Director, Tony Rooney, said: "In terms of throughput, which will vary depending on the commodity, we are targeting 1,500 tonnes per hour of steel coils and a rate of 800-1,200 tonnes per hour for cereals, aggregates, fertiliser and sand.

"With a capacity of 50 tonnes, the Mantsinen 200M can lift in excess of 10 cubic metres of agribulks at a time, but since the Garston machine will be feeding trailers directly, the priority is accuracy rather than out and out productivity."

Cooper Specialised Handling (<http://www.cooperhandling.com/>) has also supplied ABP's Port of Garston with a series of Mantsinen designed and manufactured attachments along with the 'quick-hitch' MC720 rotator, which facilitates the easy interchanging of tools. Crane operators will be able to switch

between clamshell buckets, coil clamps and anchor hooks in approximately two minutes.