

# SUPERPORT Quarterly

September 2013



Built on its history as a great maritime trading centre, Liverpool City Region's ports, airport, road, rail, inland waterway and logistics assets, together comprise strategically important freight capability for the UK and Ireland. These assets coupled with the natural geography comprise SUPERPORT.

As usual there has been a lot of activity to update you on since our last newsletter.

I am happy to report we have made progress in appointing a consultant to undertake a distribution space supply and demand audit. This will provide evidence of the need for distribution space on the back of the increasing demand generated by infrastructure investment such as the gauge upgrade at Potter Logistics site in Knowsley Industrial Park; Liverpool2, a deep water container facility at the Port of Liverpool; and Mersey Gateway, a 6 lane bridge across the River Mersey. It will also help inform local plans as well as promoting a fertile investment environment for developers and cargo owners to create jobs in the City Region.

Centrally positioned in the UK, and situated in the largest economic region in the UK outside of London, SUPERPORT is an ideal location for

retailers, manufacturers and associated supply chains to take advantage of the port and population centric benefits of reducing supply chain costs, reducing carbon output and reducing lead times to market.

Indeed a recent H1 report from Knight Frank highlighted the upturn in industrial property activity in the North West. You can read more on page 2. Liverpool City Region needs to act now to ensure we capitalise on the potential economic benefit in the coming years.

To maximise the economic development and job creation potential in the City Region sites and land need to be available for distribution warehouses for the cargo owners who will be moving goods through the City Region. Failure to understand the current supply and future demand for sites will result in cargo owners utilising space out with the City Region.

Of course we cannot forget we need the correct skills locally to fill the expected vacancies. We have news on

two employer led programmes. One such programme led by Stobart Group with Bibby Distribution, Stena Line and JobCentre plus which has successfully designed a two week pre-employment programme to provide bespoke training which allows employers to assess potential future employees in real workplace situations before recruiting them. While the new Liverpool Low Carbon and SUPERPORT University Technical College (UTC) will open in September 2014 in North Liverpool. Plus the Skills for Growth Bank is now ready to help your company invest in training – read on to find out more.

**Bernard Molloy,**  
Chair,  
Liverpool City Region  
SUPERPORT  
Committee



# SUPERPORT Property Focus

Lack of supply fuels the design and build market in the North West big shed sector.

Knight Frank has released details of the North West industrial market, which show a strong take-up in H1 2013 with 4.22m sq ft transacted in units above 50,000 sq ft. Reflecting the region's dearth of new-build existing stock, a significant 1.5m sq ft of take-up was accounted for through pre-let and design and build deals.

Omega, Warrington has provided the main focus of this activity. For example early in 2013, Hermes agreed to a 153,000 sq ft facility at Omega North, while Asda recently purchased land at Omega South to build a new 600,000 sq ft distribution hub.

Unit 4, Matrix Court, Chester (102,028 sq ft) is the region's only brand new building over 50,000 sq ft which remains available. Furthermore, only two buildings over 100,000 sq ft are presently under construction in the region, comprising two units of 166,000 sq ft in Leyland, Lancashire, being built as part of an insurance claim.

Rob Taylor, partner in Knight Frank's industrial team in Manchester said: *"With Omega North now effectively full, bar a couple of small plots, design and build opportunities have come into focus elsewhere. For example, Canmoor's Trafford Point, Trafford Park extends to 17 acres and is the largest single design and build site in Trafford Park. Elsewhere, developers are purchasing strategic sites in readiness for further design and builds, such as Barwood's acquisition of the Epic site in Wigan. In addition, Aldi have finally completed the acquisition of 35 acres at Cutacre in Bolton, which will potentially unlock the balance of this site.*

*"We are also seeing strategic purchases of good quality buildings, as evidenced by Blackstone's acquisition of Onyx 350 at Manor Park, Runcorn. This is a fully fitted facility of 350,000 sq ft with capability for a further 100,000 sq ft of expansion.*

*"Design and build activity has increased in response to a severe shortage of new stock. With a number of good quality, developer-tied sites still available throughout the region, we expect this to continue throughout 2013 and beyond.*

*"As the supply of existing Grade A stock reduces yet further, incentive packages will continue to harden and we expect headline rental levels to increase gradually in certain size sectors, including the big-format distribution market."*

H1 saw a number of notable investment transactions in the North West, including Knight Frank's sale of Merlin 310 in Trafford Park on behalf of Aviva and the sale of both the Hermes and Brakes facilities at Omega North, Warrington. Investment demand for North West distribution remains strong and significantly outweighs supply.

Already H2 is looking to be as strong with TTAS, a subsidiary of carmaker Toyota, confirming plans to take speculative 143,000 sq ft unit at Knowsley Industrial Park which will bring circa 100 jobs. Also in Knowsley Marks & Spencer have taken a 300,000 sq ft warehouse and 150,000 sq ft has been taken by Johnson Controls. In Speke B&M Bargains are building an extra 500,000 sq ft space.



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# *‘Try before you buy!’* – A simple solution to your recruitment needs!

Are you struggling to find the right people with the relevant attitudes and experiences to fill your vacancies? We have the solution!

Following an increasing trend of employers taking the lead on the design and implementation of their training, Stobart Group as employers has recently designed a two week pre-employment programme in partnership with Bibby Distribution, Stena Line and JobCentre plus. The pilot programme which was run in the North West

region saw 18 candidates attend a number of interactive and dynamic modules which were designed to give them the best possible opportunity of gaining employment. With a mixture of classroom based workshops providing candidates with soft skills such as presentation and communication and work experience days with each employer delegates were given an invaluable insight into the sector and its operations. On day ten of the programme candidates were interviewed by each partner employer with over half being taken to second interview stage over the past few weeks.

Each of the partnering employers found the initiative to be a positive process as they were able to assess these potential future employees in real workplace situations before recruiting them therefore de-risking the recruitment process.

Following positive feedback we are planning on running a series of the two week programmes in the Liverpool City Region for all employers across SUPERPORT. If you would like to find out more and potentially become a partner in this exciting initiative then please contact Rebecca Foster on 01228 882 452 or alternatively email [rebecca.foster@stobartgroup.com](mailto:rebecca.foster@stobartgroup.com).



Delegates at the end of the first two week Sector Based Work Academy programme in the North West

# Rail Gauge upgrade for Potter terminal

Potter Logistics is pleased to announce the first stage of the upgrade to their rail freight terminal (RFT) on Knowsley Industrial Park has been commissioned to begin in autumn 2013.

Potter Logistics are intending to invest £2.3m in their terminal to provide trackside facilities to load and unload the new SUPERPORT length (700m+) multimodal trains from the deep sea ports of Felixstowe, Southampton and London Gateway.

The first stage in this programme is the gauge clearance of three obstacles on the branch line into Knowsley to provide access for High Cube containers. Network Rail cleared the first obstacle during the summer and have planned works on the second obstacle at Sandbrook Road Bridge for early December. The third obstacle in Upholland Tunnel will be cleared early 2014. Potter Logistics will then invest in an extension to their existing terminal headshunt (to provide capacity for the longer trains), install additional rail infrastructure and commence building a container terminal on the south side of their facility.

Matthew Lamb, Managing Director of Potter Logistics said, "This is an exciting development for our Knowsley RFT as part of the freight infrastructure of the Knowsley Industrial Park and SUPERPORT region. This area lacks intermodal freight handling capacity, and this investment will lead to growth as well as jobs in the wider North West economy."



City College responds to Skills for Growth Agreement by expanding its training portfolio and increasing employer ownership.

The City of Liverpool College is working closely with employers and its partners to develop new courses, training and apprenticeships to address the skills needs of the emerging SUPERPORT, Logistics and Low Carbon economies.

The College has pledged to support talent acquisition and talent management within these transformational sectors through a range of outstanding bespoke training.

In association with Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) the College recently launched a range of CILT qualifications from Level 1 to Level 5 in Logistics and Transport, Road Haulage and Passenger Transport.

Companies including; Peel Ports, Mersey Maritime, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Great Bear Distribution and Merseytravel have already shown their support for this new provision.

The College is also a lead partner alongside Liverpool John Moores University on the Liverpool Low Carbon and SUPERPORT University Technical College (UTC) which will open in September 2014 in North Liverpool.

The UTC has been developed as a unique response to the strategic landscape of the city and wider city region, providing an employer led curriculum to meet the needs of the regeneration efforts underway and to tackle the skills gap.

Partners behind the UTC include; The City of Liverpool College, Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool City Council, Peel Ports, Laing O'Rourke, the Eldonians Group and a number of other high profile employers.

The involvement of LJMU and employers will ensure that students benefit from a high quality, expansive curriculum designed by experts in the field, work placements and involvement in real life projects.

Della Thomas, Head of Client Relations, said: "The SUPERPORT, Logistics and Low Carbon sectors will see rapid growth over the next decade within the City Region and it's of vital importance

that we have the skills and training required to fulfil the estimated 20,000 new jobs that will be created.

"We have a responsibility as a key educational driver in the city - alongside our key partners - to align ourselves to the key sectors that will fuel economic growth at a City Region and national level to support their skills needs and maximise their full potential."

If your business would like to become an employer partner of The Liverpool Low Carbon and SUPERPORT University Technical College and play an active role in shaping the sectors' future workforce, please email your contact details to [UTC@liv-coll.ac.uk](mailto:UTC@liv-coll.ac.uk).

For further information on the CILT qualifications please contact Angie Pearson at the City of Liverpool College on **0151 252 4741** or [angie.pearson@liv-coll.ac.uk](mailto:angie.pearson@liv-coll.ac.uk).

For further information the Liverpool Low Carbon and SUPERPORT University Technical College (UTC) please visit

<http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/llcs/>

# Skills for Growth Bank



The Skills for Growth Bank is an employer-led scheme backed by the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership to support businesses in Liverpool City Region (including Halton) with funding for **training to invest in the skills their workplaces need to grow**, enabling them to **boost their productivity**.

It can part-fund a wide range of training, **from individual courses to workplace-wide comprehensive training plans**. Based on a typical grant award, funding of up to 60% of the costs of eligible training could be made, with the remaining 40% paid for by employer co-investment.

The Skills for Growth Bank welcomes funding applications from individual companies and also groups of employers wanting to meet a shared training need.

**To find out how we can support your business, please contact Julie Byrne at the Skills for Growth Bank via 0151 443 3237 or e-mail [julie.byrne@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:julie.byrne@knowsley.gov.uk).**



The **key points** for the Skills for Growth Bank are as follows:

- companies can apply for funding anywhere between £1,000 and £1 million
- particularly keen to co-fund apprenticeship training costs (either for existing or new employees enrolling on an apprenticeship)
- can fund other accredited qualifications
- can fund pre-employment training to help people into work
- statutory training (e.g. health and safety training) and higher education cannot be funded
- VAT costs are ineligible for funding

For further information on the scheme please see: [www.skillsforgrowthbank.org.uk](http://www.skillsforgrowthbank.org.uk).

## Case Study

As part of a larger application, a major manufacturer in the City Region received funding support from the Skills for Growth Bank towards the training costs of enrolling two school leavers on an apprenticeship in engineering.

This included funding towards the normal apprenticeship framework for engineering, plus a series of bolt-on modules that wouldn't normally attract public funding.

## Events

### September

Tues 24th (7.30am - 9am)

#### **Insider Breakfast SUPERPORT**

Maritime Museum, Liverpool

### October

Wed 2nd (10am - 12pm)

#### **Panel meeting**

at Hill Dickinson, Liverpool



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