

## **Acres of Floor Space but not Enough Room.**

*The Logistics Business and Canary Wharf Contractors have successfully solved the problems of a constricted site using an innovative crane management system.*

As the development of London's Docklands continues at a frenetic pace, the level of activity at individual sites is growing and the working space available for construction is shrinking rapidly. On a congested site in the centre of the Isle of Dogs, Canary Wharf Contractors are at present building twelve high rise structures, some of which are up to 43 storeys. With work proceeding simultaneously on all units there was just not enough space available to get the job done efficiently and expeditiously. Something had to give!

There was simply no room on site for construction operations, short-term parking, ground level materials storage, and for materials handling. As construction peaked, the arrival of up to 250 delivery trucks each day posed a very real problem. An orderly supply of materials is essential if construction activities are not to be impeded. The main problem is that lorries occupy valuable space waiting to be off-loaded, as well as during the unloading period, and congestion develops sooner than expected.

Traffic congestion around a large construction site or late deliveries result in missed crane pick times and hoist slots. This reduces crane and hoist productivity and can impact adversely on the construction schedule. Efficient vertical transport is the key to good logistics management in a high-rise construction project. The delivery process up to the point of use of the construction materials high up in the building needs to be integrated and controlled.

Before lorry numbers got out of hand, the contractor recognised the problem for what it was, and hit the Web. Canary Wharf Contractors needed a totally integrated solution. The search was on for a specialist who could deliver a supply chain solution based on an analytical capability and extensive experience. Canary Wharf Contractors engaged The Logistics Business, a consultant specialising in the all aspects of supply chain management. Located in Bromsgrove near Birmingham, the company is expert in addressing all sorts of movement and storage difficulties. With successful solutions covering every part of commerce and industry, The Logistics Business has developed a wide range of software to deal with both movement, and non-movement.

The Logistics Business's Zone-Manager program, originally developed for industrial warehouse loading and unloading applications, suited Canary Wharf Contractors' needs precisely. Trucks can no longer turn up on site without a delivery slot and incoming vehicles are now expected. After a short time spent in a holding area they move to an unloading zone where they are unloaded using the correct equipment. Materials are transferred, either to ground level stores or, most usually, by crane, or hoist straight up to the structures adjacent to the end users. This largely eliminates the double handling of materials, and ensures good crane and hoist productivity.

Zone-Manager is essentially a vehicle arrival management system coupled to the planned use of site resources, be they cranes, hoists, labour or parking space. Each building site is divided into zones to optimise the use of fixed plant, such as tower cranes and hoists. This reduces the impact of ground level operations, which occasionally impinge on normal unloading areas.

The deployment of Zone-Manager has ensured a continuous, and orderly, arrival of materials that has resulted in a notable improvement in the efficiency of site operations. The productivity of cranes and hoists has increased significantly, and there has also been a positive feedback from the hundreds of suppliers involved in this major project.

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Transport Managers at every supplier can have access to information on arrival times, the period spent in holding areas, unloading times and the time of departure. Surprisingly, to all except The Logistics Business, the use of Zone-Manager has reduced the total time that trucks spend on site. This feature has also delivered a welcome improvement in productivity to vehicle operators.

The major factor behind the success of this Zone-Manager application has been that the TLB solution was specifically tailored to the needs of the site. As Douglas Blackstock, the logistics manager for Canary Wharf Contractors, comments; "The Logistics Business rapidly established our requirements, site capacity and constraints. A dynamic solution was delivered quickly and the benefits were immediate. Acceptance was no problem as there were benefits for ourselves, and our trade contractors. As the scale of construction activity peaks, control of delivery vehicles and tight scheduling of hoists and cranes is essential. Zone-Manager now forms an integral part of our management process in all jobs."

**For more information please contact:**

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