

MITSUBISHI ANNOUNCES MAJOR INVESTMENT AT LUCITE INTERNATIONAL'S BILLINGHAM SITE



Lucite International's Cassel Site at Billingham on Teesside is set to be the new location for the manufacture of a key electric battery component.

Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation (MCC), a sister company of Lucite International within the Mitsubishi Chemical Holdings Group, has chosen the site to begin the manufacture in Europe of electrolyte, the active ingredient in Li-ion batteries.

Subject to planning approval from Stockton Borough Council, a new batch blending plant will be built next year on the Cassel site. MCC is planning a capacity of 10,000 tonnes of product a year.

The investment is supported by a £250,000 grant from One North East and the UK Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The project will create a number of permanent jobs in the operation of the plant and also sustain jobs in the supply chain including the transport, logistics and plant maintenance sectors.

Thornaby-based K Home International Limited has been appointed to provide the engineering design, procurement and construction management services to MCC and, subject to planning and regulatory approvals being granted, construction work is expected to begin early next year with the plant operational in the fourth quarter.

Phil Bailey, Cassel Site Director at Lucite International, said: "We are delighted and honoured that Cassel has been selected for this major investment in the green economy.

"It is a very exciting development, showing the benefits of being part of one of the largest chemical groups in the world, and represents a major vote of confidence in the skills and experience available on Teesside.

"We have worked closely with MCC to help them secure this investment and I would like to thank the various agencies and the local firms that have helped us put together project estimates in such a short time – a true testament to the teamwork that exists in the engineering and process industries here on Teesside."

Ben Inoue, Director of Overseas Projects for Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation, said: "The skills of the workforce on Teesside plus the excellent infrastructure that exists in the area were major factors in deciding where to make this strategic investment."

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