

Aeternum, the developer that owns the former Hickson Chemical Works in Castleford, West Yorkshire, are awaiting the findings of an expert industry group as it nears the end of a £1.2 million trial to look at techniques to clean up residual contamination left behind on parts of the site by nearly a century of chemical industry.



This is the latest phase in the clean-up and regeneration of the site by the Aeternum team, who have already been working closely with Wakefield Council to successfully remove the restriction on development in the area surrounding the dormant plant.

The restriction zone, which was in place when the chemical works were in operation, meant that no housing could be built within a mile of the plant for safety reasons. With the chemical works closed and Aeternum hard at work cleaning up the site, the restriction zone is no longer necessary. This opens up the opportunity for the eastern part of town to be totally rejuvenated, with new housing, businesses and industry.

The conclusion of the current work on site, which is being driven forward by Cambridge University and Eco Foundations with the support of 12 industry partners, paves the way for the next stage of Aeternum's overall project, to clear the remaining plant equipment before redevelopment can begin.

Aeternum has already begun work on their exciting plans to transform the old Hickson chemicals site into a modern, industrial hub for the future. The clean-up operation itself is expected to cost around £20 million, with extensive further investment and unrivalled, highly-skilled job opportunities for the Castleford community to come in the next phase.

Speaking today David Frohnsdorff, Partner at Aeternum, said:

"We are proud and privileged to have been a part of this site trial, which brings together leaders in academia, business and industry.

"We look forward to seeing its conclusions and assessing the best way we can make this site ready for regeneration.

"The future is very bright for this area and we look forward to sharing our plans with the community in the coming months."

John Markham OBE, Former CEO of Hickson and Adviser to Aeternum, added:

"It is fantastic to see that the potential in this site is being realised for the good of the whole community.

"Jobs, investment and sustainable enterprise are exactly what Castleford needs and this regeneration project is what's required to achieve this."