

Victrex: £10 million world class facility opens to help accelerate innovation trend

New “Polymer Innovation Centre” now operational for pilot-plant scale manufacturing of new PAEK polymers. A milestone in Victrex’s ongoing and intensive programme of pioneering research and development

Thornton Cleveleys (UK), 7 November 2017 – Continued innovation that addresses improvement in application performance is an integral part of strategy and success at Victrex. Proactive investment in the development of next-generation thermoplastic solutions has now resulted in the completion of the company’s new £10 million world class “Polymer Innovation Centre”. The centre is fully operational and represents additional proof of Victrex’s dedication to pioneering research and development focused upon VICTREX™ PEEK* polymer and other differentiated grades within the PAEK* family of high-performance thermoplastics. Recent innovations include the introduction of VICTREX AE250 composites for the Aerospace industry, which ties in with the company’s polymer-to-parts strategy.

The Polymer Innovation Centre will further extend Victrex’s capabilities in innovation and assist customers in the development of technological advances using VICTREX PAEK solutions. Co-located at the company’s UK headquarters, the new centre will function as an enabler for rapid prototyping of new parts and components with novel PAEK materials. The manufacture of new and differentiated polyaryletherketones on a technical scale will help in the research and testing of high-performance polymer grades aimed at achieving progress in, for example, composites and 3D printing/additive manufacturing. Victrex is currently leading a consortium backed by Innovate UK to focus on 3D printing. Helping to improve the process for manufacturing existing polymers will also be supported by the new centre.



Victrex: new Polymer Innovation Centre © Victrex

Partnering to achieve excellence in prototyping and the development of new applications

The strategic importance of the new centre was underlined by Jakob Sigurdsson, the new CEO at Victrex, who commented, "We continue to expand our PAEK-based portfolio, services and technologies into new markets

and new applications. As an innovative world leader and pioneer in high-performance polymers, investments in science and manufacturing capability are key to continuous innovation and to improve innovation cycles and time-to-market. This new facility is another important step for us, particularly as we anticipate around 10-20% of our overall sales will come from new differentiated PAEK polymer grades and our mega-programmes in the medium term. It will further enhance our capacity for R&D, where we will continue to work in close and continuous cooperation with our customers and partners in driving new and differentiated polymer solutions.”

The centre is expected to create approximately 60 new jobs in the region over the next 10 years. It delivers 30-70 kg batch manufacture of novel polyaryletherketones, and can support the continual improvement in quality and performance of existing products. The 16metre high building is equipped with unique, state-of-the-art pilot-scale process technology and equipment that opens up new dimensions for the development of high-performance polymers. After a 3 year planning and construction phase, the Centre was recently completed and with funding, totalling some £1.3 million (British pounds), provided by the UK’s Regional Growth Fund.

Industry megatrends drive PAEK polymer solutions

Across key industries, mega-trends are driving the use of PAEK materials and Victrex’s R&D strategy, including the Polymer Innovation Centre, which is expected to function as an enabler in the delivery of identified growth opportunities. With its advanced thermoplastics, production processes and integrated offerings, the company’s solutions are contributing to increased efficiencies by typically replacing traditional metals. For the automotive, aerospace, electronics and energy industries and also in the design and development of materials and selected semi-finished/finished implantable products for the medical industry, Victrex solutions help to facilitate greater productivity, performance and reliability, as well as overall cost reductions.

Polyetheretherketone (PEEK) is one of more than 300 members of the high-performance polyaryletherketone (PAEK) family, located at the top of the polymer pyramid. VICTREX PEEK polymers are ideally suited to extreme and demanding environments, where alternative materials can meet specific individual needs, but PEEK can support multiple requirements. It offers exceptional inherent properties such as chemical and wear resistance, very good dimensional stability and performance across extreme temperature ranges, e.g. withstanding continuous use in temperatures of up to 260°C. Other features include high strength and stiffness, hydrolysis resistance, resistance to aggressive substances and excellent tribological properties.



Further information on Victrex: <https://www.victrex.com> and www.victrexplc.com

* Polyaryletherketone (PAEK) is a family of high-performance thermoplastics, such Polyetheretherketones (PEEK) representing over 80% of materials in the PAEK family. An overview that provides further information is available on our blog: <https://www.victrex.com/en/blog/2017/a-closer-peek-at-peek>

Supporting information on all claims available upon request from Victrex.

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About Victrex

Victrex is an innovative world leader in high-performance polymer solutions, focussed on the strategic markets of automotive, aerospace, energy (including manufacturing & engineering), electronics and medical. Every day, millions of people use products and applications, which contain our materials – from smartphones, aeroplanes and cars to oil and gas operations and medical devices. With over 35 years' experience, we develop world leading solutions in PEEK- and PAEK-based polymers and selected semi-finished and finished parts which shape future performance for our customers and our markets, and drive value for our shareholders. Find out more at www.victrex.com VICTREX™, APTIV™, VICOTE™, VICTREX PIPES™, VICTREX HT™, VICTREX ST™, VICTREX WG™, PEEK-ESD™ and the Triangle (Device), are trademarks of Victrex plc or its group companies.

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