

Pensana spells out £15m investment to the City as magnet metals move closer

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A detailed update on work to establish a £100 million rare earth separation facility on the Humber has been given to the City.

London Stock Exchange-listed Pensana is the mining company behind the consented plans for Saltend Chemicals Park, where a complex process plant would kickstart a magnet metals supply chain from the site.

A [£15 million equity raise](#) saw the start of early stage development work last month, and now the work underway has been spelt out to investors, as it advised on freeport status and further funding too.

Chairman Paul Atherley said arrangements are being made with ABP for direct port access to Saltend, briefing would-be backers on how the Treasury's committed freeport status is "expected to take the form of an economic enterprise zone providing a combination of benefits, enabling the rapid development of the project and frictionless trade with European and international customers".

Applications to the Automotive Transformation Fund are also being followed closely, with electric vehicles and wind

turbines the key end markets. It comes as major [plans were revealed by Nissan last week](#) for an EV hub. The Humber's location between car making hotspots of the North East and West Midlands was part of the attraction.

Mr Atherley said: "Demands for more secure and responsible supply chains, higher prices on carbon, and policies such as the border carbon adjustments are setting the stage for greater transparency and traceability in minerals and metals – enablers of the global energy transition.

"The Humber is already the UK's busiest port complex; the freeport status with its customs and tax incentives aimed at levelling up provides the opportunity to establish the world's first rare earth processing hub within an economic enterprise zone, with the benefits of frictionless trade with Europe and the rest of the world.

"We continue to work closely with our application for funding from the Automotive Transformation Fund, a long-term programme designed to enable the UK to build the world's most comprehensive and compelling electrified vehicle supply chain, supporting over 160,000 jobs."



Pensana chair Paul Atherley.

(Image: Pensana)

Mr Atherley said the site on the banks of the Humber, has been designed to be easily adapted to cater for a range of rare earth feedstocks with the aim “to establish Saltend as an attractive alternative to mining houses who may otherwise be limited to selling their products to China” – underlining the planned EU and UK carbon border taxation that could enforce sustainability.

Front end engineering design is anticipated to close in October, with ongoing continuous process pilot plant runs to confirm equipment selection, sizing and specifications later this summer.

Pensana is working with international engineering group Wood, with 40 experts from Western Australian, UK and South African operations now involved in both the extraction and processing developments at Longonjo, Angola and the Humber.

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With site owner and operator [PX Group](#), it is furthering the design of bulk supply infrastructure as well as utility and key chemicals facilities, so too preparation of works packages for demolition and removal of a redundant tank farm.

Onsite firefighting facilities are being relocated to accommodate the refinery footprint, with environmental and operating permit submissions also being worked up.

It is advancing a recently completed concept study into metal alloy production at Saltend, with discussions also ongoing with Equinor, following first phase approval, to establish a [hydrogen-led recycling facility for end-of-life offshore wind](#)

[turbine nacelles](#), as reported.