

Pharmaceutical giant GSK opens new £90m North East manufacturing site

Pharmaceutical giant GSK has opened a new facility at its Barnard Castle site after a £90m investment.

The aseptic smart manufacturing facility – known as Q Block – will allow the Barnard Castle site to strengthen its global role in bringing new medicines for a range of diseases into production, GSK said.

Trials of the fully automated facility, which uses digital technology to make manufacturing operations as efficient as possible, began in 2020 and it will start manufacturing medicines for commercial use during the first half next year.

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The facility will support existing and new biopharmaceutical assets in GSK's portfolio and pipeline. It was constructed according to sustainability criteria that align GSK's targets to be net zero and nature positive by 2030

Elizabeth Rowbotham, GSK Barnard Castle site director said: "Barnard Castle is a key site for GSK, and at the heart of the future strategy for the company delivering important existing and new medicines globally.

"The Q Block facility puts GSK and Barnard Castle at the forefront of medicines manufacture and I am delighted the site will play such an important role supporting the delivery of our innovative pipeline. This investment demonstrates GSK's commitment to the local area and I look forward to continuing to build a skilled team of people from across a mix of disciplines. What we do together here makes a difference to

patients every day and I am honoured to work alongside such a committed team.”

Barnard Castle is one of GSK’s largest manufacturing sites in the UK, employing around 1,000 people and supplying nearly half a million packs of products per day to 140 global markets. The site was founded in 1945 and is one of the largest local employers. It manufactures a range of products, including some of GSK’s most innovative medicines for HIV, respiratory disease and auto-immune diseases.

Regis Simard, president of GSK global supply chain said: “I am delighted to join our teams in officially opening our smart manufacturing facility at our Barnard Castle site. This is a highly advanced technical achievement and by successfully applying digital technology we will be able to launch more transformational medicines at speed for patients, by developing a right first time capability, whilst also reducing waste.

“This investment further demonstrates how we are building our capacity and capability in our supply chain to be even more ambitious for patients. Thank you to all who have worked tirelessly to design, construct and test this impressive new facility.”

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