



WEC Group Ltd Acquires £7m Rotherham Factory to Strengthen Operations at MTL Advanced

WEC Group Ltd, one of the largest Engineering and Fabrication companies in the UK has acquired a 300,000 sq. ft. factory and 30 acres of land as a way of strengthening operations at its Rotherham-based site, MTL Advanced.

The £7m acquisition of the Grange Lane facility, which has been occupied by MTL since 2011, is part of an ambitious programme of investment throughout the Group aimed at increasing manufacturing space and giving room for further growth.

This raises the total investment of the Group over the past 12 months to the record amount of £11 million.

Steve Hartley, WEC Group Managing Director commented: *“The acquisition of the facility is a considerable addition to the Group’s assets portfolio which will give us a long term competitive advantage. It also gives us much needed room for future expansion.”*

Originally built in 1990 as a former distribution depot and lorry park, the sizeable property was converted for industrial use in 2010 and is in fact larger than WEC’s seven other manufacturing facilities grouped together. It has raised the WEC Group’s overall manufacturing floorspace to over 500,000 sq. ft.

Richard Clithero, Associate Commercial Property Solicitor at Forbes Solicitors, commented: *“This site is a substantial facility and the acquisition represents a real commitment to the area by WEC Group. With this purchase following on from the acquisition of the MTL business, it is great to see WEC Group going from strength to strength.”*

WEC Group’s investment rush was kick-started in February last year with the multi-million pound acquisition of MTL, which brought the Yorkshire company out of administration and saved 135 jobs.

Under WEC’s leadership, MTL is already showing strong signs of recovery with month-on-month profitability and with 55 new jobs created since the acquisition. The company has also won several multi-million pound export contracts for the Defence Industry as a result of new capital equipment, and a recruitment drive is currently under way to fill more skilled positions.

Group Commercial Director, Wayne Wild said the first twelve months following the partnership deal had seen a significant amount of growth and development: *“We have really hit the ground running, and as a result we have seen some very positive and encouraging results.*

“MTL is continuing to move forward in the right direction and we have got some very large contracts in the pipeline. The acquisition of the Grange Lane facility will give us a better control of our cost base and will pave the way for future success”

In addition to the recent property acquisition, a further £1m has been invested late 2015 in new equipment at the site to increase capacity and widen the range of services the Group can offer. This includes a state-of-the-art six metre bed laser cutting machine as well as an in-house wet painting line. The company has also invested in a new in-house training school to mirror WEC’s award winning Welding & Engineering Training Academy, creating 6 new apprenticeship positions in the process.

Karl Stewart, Sales Director at MTL is excited for the future and the opportunities that now exist for the Rotherham firm. He said: *“The partnership with WEC Group is already proving to be very strong and has enhanced our capabilities, which is a major advantage to all our customers.*

“The additional capacity that the deal has brought is proving to be another big positive.”

The addition of MTL Advanced to WEC Group just 12 months ago has now created a major force in the UK's fabrication and engineering sector, with a workforce of now around 640 highly-skilled staff.

WEC Group’s growth ambitions aren’t however limited to MTL Advanced, as other areas of the business have also received substantial investment as part of the ongoing expansion plan. This includes over £2.5m of investment in capital equipment such as the latest CNC machining and waterjet cutting technology at the Group’s Blackburn sites, as well as further investments at the new Darwen-based Powder Coating division.

Continuous investments in new technology and manufacturing facilities has been key to WEC Group’s success since acquiring MTL Advanced. The company has managed to achieve 48% growth in turnover and raised staff from 445 to 640 in just 12 months.

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