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Environment to benefit from £20 million investment to cut emissions

Lafarge Cement UK, a member of the British Cement Association (BCA), has announced (21 July 2005) significant investment plans to cut emissions from its Dunbar works in Scotland by installing a £20 million gas scrubbing system.

The new system will cut the works' emissions of both sulphur dioxide and dust by more than half, ensuring the factory will comfortably comply with new stringent local air quality standards and meet the exacting requirements of the EU Waste Incineration Directive.

Speaking after the announcement, Mike Gilbert, Chief Executive of the BCA said:

“The new investment shows the cement industry's continuing contribution and commitment to sustainable development and sustainable construction. Throughout the industry, companies have invested heavily in new, efficient and cleaner plants to progress its sustainability objectives.”

CEMEX, owners of the Rugby cement works, is planning to invest £6.5 million in installing bag filters on the plant, subject to planning permission and Environment Agency approval. The filters which will place a physical barrier between the gases in the process and the atmosphere, could achieve a reduction of up to 40 per cent in emissions of particulates. Installation could be complete by the end of 2006.

Buxton Lime Industries' new £110 million plant at Tunstead Quarry have reduced particulate emissions by 90 per cent and improved energy efficiency by 40 per cent, while Castle Cement's new £62 million modern Padeswood kiln should come into operation later this month.

Performance, the industry's corporate responsibility report published in July, showed that the industry has reduced the amount of cement kiln dust going to landfill sites from 110,000 tonnes in 2002 to 63,500 in 2004. Further progress towards sustainability include cutting emissions of carbon dioxide by around 24 per cent between 1990 and 2004 and using over one million tonnes of waste materials in 2004 as replacement fuels or raw materials.

For further information:

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Notes to editors:

The British Cement Association (BCA) is the trade and research organisation that represents the interests of the United Kingdom's cement industry in its relations with Her Majesty's Government, the European Union and relevant organisations in the United Kingdom. The members of the BCA (Buxton Lime Industries, Castle Cement, Lafarge Cement UK and Rugby Cement) are the major domestic manufacturers of Portland cement producing over 90% of the cement sold in the UK.

The cement industry has an annual turnover of £750 million and is a major supplier to the construction industry. It employs around 3,500 people directly with a further 15,000 jobs depending upon its operations.