

DISTIL PLC

Ardgowan Distillery Company Limited signs equipment supply for Ardogwan distillery project

Distil plc (AIM:DIS), owner of premium drinks brands RedLeg Spiced Rum, Blackwoods Gin and Vodka, TRØVE Botanical Vodka and Blavod Black Vodka, is pleased to note that Ardogwan Distillery Company Limited (“Ardgowan”), a company in which Distil plc recently made a £3 million strategic investment, has signed an equipment supply agreement with Briggs of Burton Plc (“Briggs”) in relation to Ardogwan’s new Malt Whisky distillery (“Ardgowan Distillery”), planned for opening in 2023.

Ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, Ardogwan has announced a partnership with Briggs, a globally recognised engineering company with extensive experience in the distilling industry, to realise its ambitious for a new multi-million-pound eco-friendly distillery near Inverkip, west of Glasgow. The partnership goal will be to deliver a carbon negative distillery in 2024 after an initial period of equipment testing and commissioning. The agreement has the following key features:

- New low carbon technologies at the heart of the agreement
- Distillery site to be showcase for Briggs technology
- Companies to cooperate on deployment of innovative solutions
- Initial operations on the site to start in 2022

Working together, Ardogwan and Briggs are creating a modular distillery, which is being designed to adapt as sustainable technology evolves, ensuring that the distillery will remain at the forefront of sustainability measures.

Briggs, which designs, engineers and builds distilleries around the world, has specifically designed each part of the whisky making process – from mashing to distillation – so that new technologies can be swapped in to ensure that the Ardogwan Distillery will be at the forefront of energy reduction, heat recovery and CO₂ capture as new technologies emerge.

The Scotch Whisky Association’s Sustainability Strategy launched in 2021 aims for the sector to reach net zero by 2040 – ten years ahead of the UK Government’s targets. A study from the SWA published in 2020 cites that the 2018 industry emissions baseline was 528,792 tonnes CO₂e/year, with 63 per cent. from natural gas and 31 per cent. from fossil-based fuel oils.

From the beginning, the new distillery will maximise heat recovery from all steps in the whisky making process and will minimise water usage through the use of closed-circuit cooling loops.

As with any distillery, the distillation process itself is a major user of heat and energy. At Ardogwan technologies such as vapour recompression and heat pumps are planned to drive a significant reduction in energy use.

The ongoing partnership will explore new advancements in technology which can be adopted at the distillery and will deliver an increasing carbon negative impact from commencement of operations.

George Crombie, Engineering Director at Briggs, said: “It has been great to work with the Ardgowan Distillery team on a process concept for their new distillery.

“The next phase will now see work commencing on bringing this unique vision to life. We are delighted Ardgowan Distillery are so keen to explore sustainable technologies to build a distillery that meets their production targets in an efficient and sustainable manner.

“Building carbon neutrality along with energy and water reduction solutions is something that Briggs are keen to drive forward and are leading the way in putting sustainability at the heart of the Scotch whisky and distilled spirits industry.”

Martin McAdam, CEO at Ardgowan, said: “It was important to us that the Ardgowan Distillery was not only sustainable by today’s standards, but set-up to lead the way in terms of sustainability across the industry in the future. The process with Briggs has been thorough, but we are delighted with the plans that we have designed together and are now excited to put them into place and set a new standard for sustainable distilleries.”

Don Goulding, Executive Chairman at Distil plc, commented: “News of the partnership between Ardgowan and Briggs is excellent. We are in full support of Ardgowan’s carbon negative ambitions and are delighted that the proposed Blackwoods Distillery will also benefit from these technologies when constructed next year and for years to come.”

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