

# SITE TOUR

## CELANESE SPONDON ACETATE

18-19 SEPTEMBER 2014



- 1 28 Building – Fire Watch Tower WWII
- 2 Site of Wages Office & Lloyds Bank
- 3 Celanese Train Line Entrance
- 4 Flake Silos (1-4)
- 5 Train Entrance for Spodnon National Grid Power Station
- 6 148 Building that had Celanese Neon Sign on North Wall
- 7 Celacol Building
- 8 Area of site No2 Boiler House
- 9 Apprentice School Huts
- 10 Clean & Effluent Drain Culverts
- 11 Door Oliver A & B Tanks
- 12 Work Shop for Trains Engines
- 13 Site of 29 Plant
- 14 2000 tonne tank produced in 29 Plant
- 15 Power Station and third Boiler House
- 16 Southern Development - Area Sold off
- 17 Substation “E”

- 18 Lake Pump House
- 19 Aromatics
- 20 Celon & Polymer Plant
- 21 Main Non-Staff Canteen
- 22 Nissan Huts
- 23 18C –Furzebrook / Bonshaw / National Plastics
- 24 Beaming Department
- 25 21 Workshop
- 26 Fold Fire Station
- 27 New Emergency Service Station
- 28 Train Engine Drivers Hut
- 29 Flake Production Silos 1-16
- 30 483 Building - Flake Manufacture
- 31 Site Post Room
- 32 Site Accounts & Main Wages Offices
- 33 Site Drawing Office
- 34 Main Staff Canteen

# A BRIEF OVERVIEW

## CELANESE SPONDON ACETATE

### EARLY DAYS

When World War 1 started, aircraft technology was in its infancy. A product called dope was used to tighten and stiffen the fabric stretched over airframes and render them airtight and weatherproof. An essential component of dope was cellulose acetate. Only three factories produced this product, these were based in Germany, France and the Dreyfus factory in Switzerland.

In September 1914 the first contact was made with the Dreyfus factory. Negotiations commenced in June 1915 with Camille and Henri Dreyfus and a company was registered in 1916. On the 19th September 1916, Derby Corporation Development Committee granted an honorarium in recognition of special services in connection with bringing the British Cellulose and Chemical Manufacturing Company to Spondon. Erection of the factory commenced in August 1916, with the main contractor being Robert McAlpine and Sons. In January 1917 problems were reported concerning delays in building the works and no cellulose acetate was produced until April.

The factory was spread over a large area in order to avoid total destruction in the event of an air raid. This was expensive, according to the 1920 Balance Sheet, the Spondon Works had a value of over £3million. It was dedicated to producing products relating to the war effort. When the government contracts ended, it was in considerable financial difficulties and almost closed.

Henri Dreyfus remained in Britain and his brother Camille moved to found "The American Cellulose & Chemical Manufacturing Company" (known as "Amcelle" for short), in New York in 1918.

### BETWEEN THE WARS

The Company continued to develop into different areas and in 1921 the first Celanese filament yarn was produced. In 1923 the name was changed to British Celanese. The move into fabric and dyes continued. The 1930s was a period of expansion; the 20s & 30s fashions suited Celanese materials. Acetate drape was in competition with silk and used widely in haute couture.

### WORLD WAR 2

The Company moved into war work again, including parachutes and underwear for the Wrens. The site was also used as an Army Storage Depot. In December 1944 Henry (Henri) Dreyfus died. The site employed over 20,000 people by the end of the war.

### AFTER THE WAR

There was an expansion into chemicals and chemical derivatives. This was in addition to producing a wide range of fabrics. In May 1957 British Celanese was purchased by a competitor, Courtaulds, however the name of the works was unaltered. Further diversification into the production of vinyl acetate for emulsion paints occurred. The production of nylon based materials expanded and tow production started. At this time acetate tow was mainly used for cigarette filters.

The 80s saw a change in the name of the works and a change in fashion towards natural fibres. The demand for acetate and celon yarn (nylon) reduced. The fabric printing operation Bonshawe closed, followed by the knitting and dyeing unit Furzebrook. Gradually other companies moved on site to use redundant buildings, including Steel Cords and National Plastics.

World demand for filter tow grew and to meet the demand, a new £50million plant was opened to produce Cellulose Diacetate Flake in 1998.

Links with the community were developed in different ways including a Community Liaison Panel, the giving of grants and support to local organisations and charities. In 1987 the SWANS (Spondon Wildlife and Naturalist Society) was formed to develop the nature reserve on site.

In September 1998 Courtaulds plc was acquired by Netherlands based Akzo Nobel and the name changed to Acordis.

Acordis was divested to CVC Capital Partners in 1999 and production continued to run down. The south end of the site was sold for development. In February 2007 the site was purchased by American Celanese, set up by Camille Dreyfus and final production at Celanese was in November 2012. Clarifoil, a subsidiary of Celanese continues production on site.



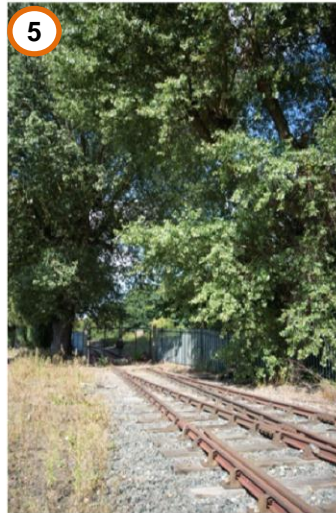
# SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

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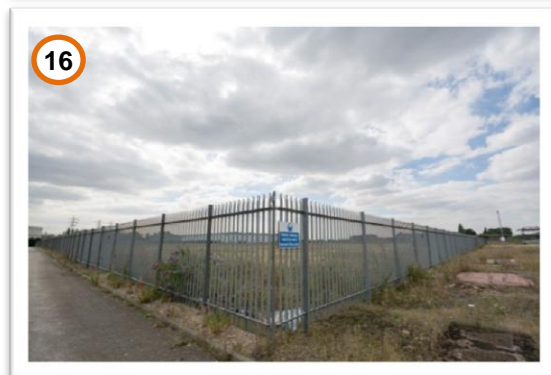
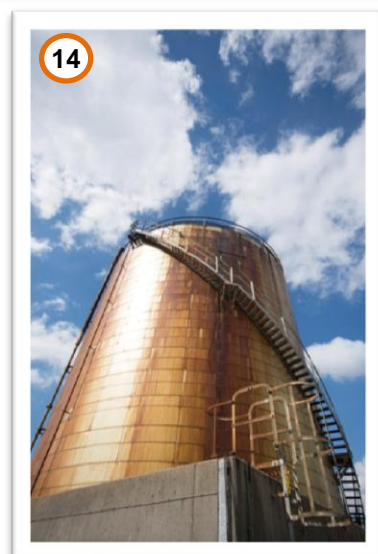
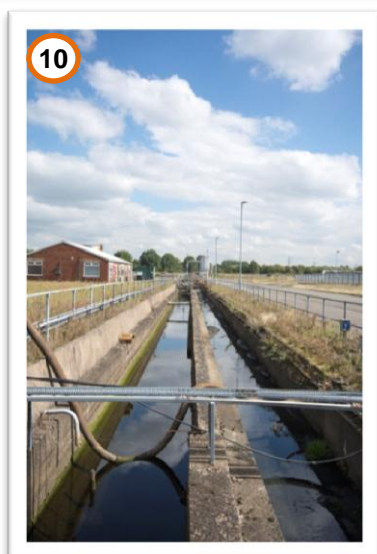


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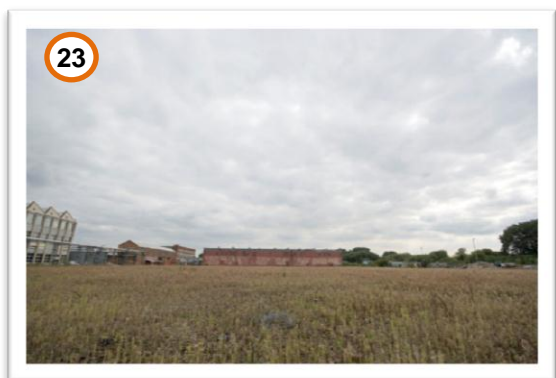
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