

ABC 1233 NEWCASTLE NEWS RADIO

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Afternoon News Bulletin

'The proponents of a 12 million dollar iron recycling plant on Newcastle's Kooragang Island are reassuring residents the facility won't have a negative impact on the environment.

The Austpac plant isn't due to start operating until the second half of next year, but the company intends to start commissioning some equipment at the site next week.

The process involves recycling waste product from steel plants including OneSteel at Waratah, into iron briquettes and hydrochloric acid.

Austpac Managing Director Mike Turbott says he understands the community concern since the Orica chemical leaks, but insists the recycling process is safe.

"It's a very different process. We're handling chlorides and iron oxides and fail-safe scrubbing systems are being implemented, so we don't anticipate any problems with our little plant. The Orica plant is quite a different kettle of fish I guess," he said.'