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By Matthew Jones

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## Rockit Global to build new headquarters

Company behind miniature apple offering to develop greenfield site in Hastings, New Zealand



**R**ockit Global has unveiled plans for its new global headquarters in New Zealand.

The company has purchased land in an industrial estate in Hastings, a city within the major Hawke's Bay apple and pear production region. The site will be transformed into a state-of-the-art facility, comprising a purpose-built packhouse, coolstores and administration buildings.

Rockit Global chief executive, Austin Mortimer, said the move marked a monumental milestone for the company, which has outgrown its current premises in Havelock North.

"This project signifies the growth of the apple industry in Hawke's Bay, and signals the coming of age of Rockit and a reflection of our confidence and belief in our product and brand," explained Mortimer.

Construction of the new facility will take place over two stages. Stage one will

see the development of a new office suite, coolstores and the highly-automated packhouse, which includes a mezzanine level to allow packaging material to be gravity fed. Rockit Global hopes to open this part of the facility in advance of the 2021 apple harvest.

The second phase, earmarked for 2025, is likely to add in further processing technology to provide further capacity for production through to 2030 and beyond.

"We have considered the footprint of the land and allowed provision to double the size of our packing area and finished goods storage. We've also considered possible expansion into further brand extensions," Mortimer added.

Rockit Global is the company behind the miniature Rockit apple, which is now sold in Asia, Australia, the Middle East, Europe, the US and New Zealand.

Earlier this year, the company launched a new kraft cardboard pack for its

snack-sized apples. The 100 per cent biodegradable and recyclable cardboard is a more environmentally conscious packaging option, sourced from sustainably managed forests. It is PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) approved.

Mortimer said consideration has been given to Rockit Global's ambition of doing no harm to the environment as it builds the new facility.

"We will be dealing with the treatment and discharge of all our own waste water, the refrigeration plant will have a zero global warming impact and we're looking into the use and placement of solar panels as a sustainable source of electricity," he said.

"This is an electrifying milestone in Rockit Global's growth and will step-change our business. We have certainly outgrown our current site with the many new people we have employed, some of whom have relocated from Auckland and abroad. While it will be a little sad to

leave our current space in Havelock North  
– a community in which we have close ties  
– we look forward to enjoying a new space  
and all that this represents.”

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