

Nissan warns again on no-deal threat to UK car plant

June 3 2020



'No deal' could mean the end of the road for Sunderland

Nissan warned Wednesday that a no-deal Brexit would threaten its vast UK car factory, the Japanese carmaker's largest plant in Europe.

The site, located in Sunderland in northeast England, manufactures models including the Juke, Leaf and Qashqai, employs 7,000 workers, and produces more than 440,000 cars per year.

Nissan has already warned that a no-deal Brexit, which would see World Trade Organization tariffs imposed on its cars, would threaten its future in Europe and in Sunderland.

The carmaker unleashed a drastic cost-slashing plan last week, as the auto sector buckles in the face of the coronavirus outbreak, but no decision was made on the Sunderland facility.

"We are the number one carmaker in the UK and we want to continue. We are committed," Nissan's global chief operating officer Ashwani Gupta told the BBC on Wednesday.

"Having said that, if we are not getting the current tariffs, it's not our intention but the business will not be sustainable. That's what everybody has to understand."

Britain officially left the European Union on January 31 but remains under the bloc's rules until the end of the year while both sides try to thrash out terms of a new relationship.

Trade negotiators from Britain and the EU are this week locked in a fourth round of post-Brexit negotiations, but no-one in London or Brussels expects a breakthrough in the video-conference talks that conclude on Friday.

Nissan has already decided to shut its factory in Barcelona, where 3,000 people are employed, ending four decades of operations as it seeks to cut costs and switch focus to Asia.

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