

Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER



Dear members,

The Easter weekend has come and gone, and I do hope you have enjoyed the limited freedom that the first stage of the easing of the lockdown restrictions has given to us. Be that by visiting friends or family that you have not seen for some time or by just getting out in the sunshine.

To most of us that is a welcome move in the right direction. I for one am feeling a little safer as I also have just received my second vaccination of the Pfizer vaccine. Both injections were taken with no after effects at all excepting for a sore arm at the site of the inoculation for a couple of days on both occasions.

From next Monday the following will be allowed:-

Stage two (from 12 April):

More businesses will open, but indoor settings should be visited alone, or with household groups. Outside, six people or two households can meet.

- All shops allowed to open.
- Hairdressers, beauty salons and other close-contact services can open.
- Restaurants and pubs allowed to serve food and alcohol to customers sitting outdoors.
- Gyms and spas can reopen, as can zoos, theme parks, libraries and community centres.
- Members of the same household can take a holiday in England in self-contained accommodation.
- Weddings - up to 15 people.
- Funerals - up to 30 people, with 15 at wakes.
- Children will be able to attend any indoor children's activity.
- Care home visitors will increase to two per resident.



Industry News

Leadership council formulates carbon reduction strategy



The Construction Leadership Council has published a plan to reduce carbon across the construction sector, from manufacturing and design to construction and operation of assets.

Construct Zero proposes a nine-point plan to reduce carbon and help the construction industry to play its part in delivering the UK government's objective of net zero for the whole economy by 2050.

The Construct Zero initiative – or CO2nstruct Zero as the organiser prefer to style it – does not set out to offer new solutions but instead brings together existing initiatives from various corners of the industry, consolidating it into collective action.

Overall UK emissions of CO₂ have been calculated at 537 million tonnes in 2018. There are three areas, collectively representing 43% of the total, that are relevant to the construction sector: transport, buildings and construction activity.

Based on these areas, the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) has used the Climate Change Committee's 6th Carbon Budget to determine nine priorities:

Transport

1. Accelerating the shift of the construction workforce to zero emission vehicles and onsite plant
2. Maximising use of modern methods of construction and improved onsite logistics, reducing waste and transport to sites
3. Championing developments and infrastructure investments that both enable connectivity with low carbon modes of transport and design to incorporate readiness for zero emission vehicles

Buildings

4. Work with government to deliver retrofitting to improve energy efficiency of the existing housing stock
5. Scale up industry capability to deliver low carbon heat solutions in buildings, supporting heat pump deployment, trials of hydrogen heating systems and heat networks

6. Enhancing the energy performance of new and existing buildings through higher operational energy efficiency standards and better building energy performance monitoring

Construction activity

7. Implementing carbon measurement, to support our construction projects in making quantifiable decisions to remove carbon

8. Become world leaders in designing out carbon, developing the capability of our designers and construction professionals to develop designs in line with circular economy – reducing embedded and operational carbon, shifting commercial models to incentivise and reward measurable carbon reductions.

9. Support development of innovative low carbon materials (prioritising concrete and steel), as well as advancing low carbon solutions for manufacturing production processes and distribution.

The CLC plans to monitor progress and provide quarterly updates to show industry performance against these priorities.

“The construction industry must come to terms with the impact of the built environment on the climate,” said CLC co-chair Any Mitchell. “The last year has shown the incredible things that we are capable of when we work together, responding to Covid-19 and keeping our industry working safely and effectively. We must now bring the same spirit and energy to addressing the climate emergency. If our industry is to thrive, we must proactively address the challenges we face before it is too late.”

Civil Engineering Contractors Association chief executive Alasdair Reisner said: “Achieving net zero in construction is the single greatest challenge our sector will face in this century. The construction industry must adapt to a net zero future, not only to address the threat of climate change, but to modernise and keep up with our international competitors.

“This will require a whole-industry strategic approach, which is why we fully support the role of the Construction Leadership Council in spearheading this vital initiative.

“The CLC is in the process of developing measurable targets to monitor how the industry is moving towards net zero over the coming years, and it is the responsibility of everyone working in UK construction to get behind this initiative and deliver the net zero carbon economy of the future.”



CITB in shock colleges U-turn



The Construction Industry Training Board has scrapped its plans to sell its colleges and quit training.

In a surprise U-turn, CITB chairman Peter Lauener has decided not to sell the National Construction Colleges at Bircham Newton in Norfolk and Inchinnan in Glasgow.

Sale discussions with a training provider will continue for Erith and the NCC

Midlands training facility has already been sold to Walsall College. However, the inability to find suitable buyers for Bircham Newton and Inchinnan means that the CITB will now stay in the business of training after all.

This represents a remarkable U-turn from the policy that has been in progress since publication of the transformative Vision 2020 strategy in 2017.

CITB had agreed a deal in principal in February 2020 to sell Bircham Newton – officially National Construction College East – to West Suffolk College. Completion of the deal had been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic but the industry had been led to expect that finalisation of the sale was imminent.

The board said that a condition of any sale was the assurance that employers would continue to have training provision that was not readily available in the wider training market. However, it has not been possible to find suitable buyers for all the training businesses, it said, particularly for specialist trades.

Peter Lauener, chair of CITB's board, said: "In 2017 the government and construction industry were clear that reform of CITB had to be delivered. We committed to delivering that change while making sure that industry did not lose training capacity, especially in specialist areas, in cases where it was not possible to find a new training provider.

"The Vision 2020 reforms, and other changes made in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, have successfully realigned our business to make us better able to support employers investing in skills. CITB operates colleges which provide vital and valued training where we have not been able to find suitable buyers that could continue to deliver the scope of high quality training the industry needs. The continuing uncertainty is damaging for employers who need to be sure they can get their staff trained, as well as for CITB colleagues who have supported their customers and learners throughout.

“The right course of action to support industry now is to provide stability and assurance. The board has therefore decided to retain NCC East and NCC Scotland. This decision gives employers and CITB colleagues confidence and clarity and enables us to plan for the future, having realised the core ambitions of reform. We will of course keep these businesses under close review as we do for every aspect of our operation and this might lead in due course to alterations in our approach to NCC but we have no plans at present to return to market.”

CITB is gradually reopening the National Construction Colleges (NCCs) in England as per government guidelines, with apprentices being welcomed back from the week beginning 22 March. NCC Scotland remains closed for face-to-face learning though the intention is to reopen in April.

There is no suggestions at this stage that CITB wants to take back responsibility for construction industry qualifications and skills cards. Since the sale of Cskills Awards to NOCN (previously the National Open College Network) as part of the reform process, CITB no longer awards certificates or qualifications.

However, The Construction Index understands that retaining ownership of Bircham Newton and Inchinnan is not just a temporary suspension of the sale process but an absolute *volte face* of policy and a return to its core purpose of providing training.

The Unite union welcome the U-turn but called for a further re-think. Regional co-ordinating officer Mark Robinson said: “The decision to retain the national construction colleges is excellent news for the workers employed by the CITB but also for the whole construction industry, who rely on the unique specialised training that only the construction colleges provide.

“This announcement should secure the future of the national construction colleges for many years. However, selling the colleges was a major plank of the CITB’s 2020 Vision and this has completely failed. Our members have had their lives put on hold for three and a half years, not knowing who their employer would be, or if they even would have a job.

“The CITB’s board has invested heavily in a new head office in Peterborough, resulting in hundreds of workers being made redundant. Outsourced providers have contributed to massive failings in the payroll system, leaving hundreds of CITB employees owing large amounts of money and causing huge distress.

“The reputational damage that the CITB has suffered across the entire construction industry has been immense.

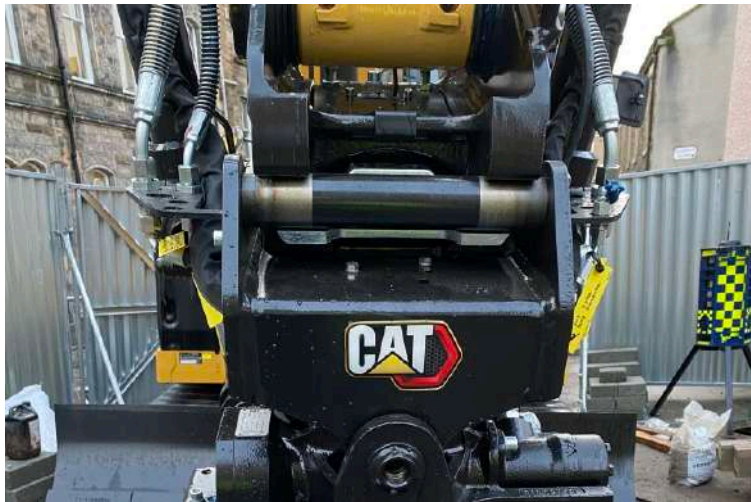
“Unite warned at the outset that the CITB’s restructure plans were ill thought out and unrealistic, the union takes little satisfaction in those fears being entirely correct.

“The CITB’s board need to fundamentally rethink how it treats its staff and its relationship with industry. The decision on the construction colleges must be the start of that process.

“Investment is urgently needed in products, infrastructure and most importantly its employees, in order to rebuild its reputation with its staff and industry alike.”

Plant Machinery

Keystone converted to tiltrotators



Edinburgh groundworks contractor Keystone Construction has bought the first Cat 308 excavator in the UK to be fitted with the new Cat TiltRotate system.

Keystone Construction has used its new machine on a city centre high-rise project where it proved its value.

Here, the excavator was used to dig two complex shapes within half a metre from the site boundary on each side. Normally

working in close proximity to an obstruction would require repeatedly moving the machine or using additional equipment. However, with the TiltRotate system (TRS), which enables the operator to rotate the bucket 360 degrees continuously with a 40-degree angled tilt, the operator could just keep going, adjusting the bucket angle as required.

“Rotating and tilting the bucket at every angle allows operators to dig sideways, around a corner and in really tight, confined spaces,” said Keystone Construction director Jonathan Prior. “It has already proved to be extremely valuable, enabling us to complete some of our most challenging jobs to date.”

Until recently, Keystone hired in machines to fulfil its building contracts. But after test-driving a Next Generation Cat 308 at its local branch of Finning, the Caterpillar dealer, Keystone decided to make its first purchase.

It is now considering its next Cat purchase, which is likely to be a Cat 313 excavator, it said.

Meet Bobcat's new light compaction family



Bobcat has begun to roll out a new range of light compaction machinery, as part of its bid to rule the roost in the compact equipment market.

The new Bobcat light compaction ranged is manufactured by Amman and re-badged under licence.

Altogether, the Bobcat light compaction range comprises seven different product families and will ultimately offer 37 models, from vibratory rammers weighing 29kg up to 2.6-tonne tandem rollers.

It also includes, vibratory forward plates, reversible vibratory plates, hydrostatic plates, walk behind rollers and trench rollers.

Mike Vought, senior director for product management at Doosan Bobcat EMEA, said: "The launch of the complete compaction line-up is part of the exciting diversification strategy under our innovative Next is Now umbrella. Along with product innovations this is another driver on the way to achieving our vision – becoming the world leader in the compact equipment market. To accomplish our goals, even in the extremely difficult year of 2020,

we introduced an unprecedented number of new products and technologies and we will continue this in 2021.

“Compaction is one of the completely new product categories, together with wheel loaders, that Bobcat introduced in 2020. This expansion was complemented by significant developments in the market-leading mini-excavator, rotary and rigid frame telehandler, skid-steer and compact track loader and backhoe loader ranges from Bobcat.”

Vibratory rammers

The Bobcat line-up of vibratory rammers consists of six models – the R30, R60, R68, R60P, R68P and R70D from 29kg to 89kg and is intended for small compaction works for trenches, drainage and pipelines. Due to their ease of transport they can be used for road maintenance as well. They are suitable for compacting mixed soils, sand, gravel materials, loam and clay.

The R68P vibratory rammer is pictured below.



Vibratory forward plates



There are also six different vibratory forward plates, which are suitable for compacting sand, gravel, lean concrete, bitumen coated gravel and paving stones. The FP10.33, FP12.40, FP15.40, FP15.50, FP20.50 and FP20.50D models are the smallest products in the Bobcat vibratory plate offering, ranging from 54kg to 115kg.

Reversible vibratory plates

Bobcat reversible vibratory plates are suitable for jobs mainly in civil engineering and road construction, for compacting all ground materials, such as sand, gravel, crushed stone, concrete and sett paving. With machine weights from 109 to 490 kg, there are 12 models in the range – the RP22.40, RP22.40D, RP25.40D, RP25.50D, RP30.50, RP30.50D, RP30.60, RP30.60D, RP40.60, RP40.60D, RP49.20D and RP59.20D.

All Bobcat reversible plates operate with a twin-shaft system, enabling change of direction during compaction, with hydrostatic steering controls.

Hydrostatic plates

Complementing the rest of the compaction plate range, there are four hydrostatic plates – the HP50.75, HP55.75, HP60.85 and HP65.85 models – weighing between 450kg and 582kg. Hydrostatic plates are designed for heavier compaction work in civil engineering and road construction, compacting any ground materials, such as sand, gravel, crushed stone, asphalt and sett paving. The Bobcat hydrostatic plate line-up relies on a fully hydraulic system that does not require a V-belt. They operate with a dual (HP50.75 and HP60.85) or triple shaft (HP55.75 and HP65.85) excitation system.

The HP65.85, the largest in the family, is pictured below.



Walk behind rollers



The walk behind rollers are suitable for compacting bituminous material as well as light earthwork and other compaction tasks. Bobcat offers the WR65 model in two versions offering a choice between Hatz or Yanmar engines, both equipped with dual drums.

They are fully hydraulic machines, with an integrated water sprinkler system as standard. The Bobcat walk behind rollers are also equipped with dual amplitude settings, enabling a change between soil/gravel and asphalt/bituminous compaction.

Trench rollers



As their name suggests, trench rollers are mainly designed for trench compaction. Bobcat is offering the 1340kg TR75 (articulated) and 1305kg TR85S (skid-steered) models.

Tandem rollers

Tandem rollers are used for larger surfaces of sub-base, asphalt or other ground materials, typically in small to medium commercial development sites and road construction sites.

Bobcat is looking to offer a range of five articulated ride-on tandem rollers and the first two models will be available in March 2021 – the ATR23 and ATR26, weighing 2.3 and 2.6 tonnes respectively. The other three models, starting at 1.2 tonnes, will be rolled out in the summer of 2021, Bobcat says.



New UK dealer for Eurocomach



Eurocomach, Italian manufacturer of mini and midi excavators and skid steers, is making a new push in the UK market.

Robustrack, based in Ingleton on the southern edge of the Lake District, is the new UK sole dealer for Eurocomach machines.

Robustrack says it will have Eurocomach excavators available for demonstrations from May. The excavator range covers 1.2 to 10 tonne operating weights, with a zero tail swing version available for

most sizes. All machines are supplied with buckets and quick hitch as standard and are fitted with a dedicated auxiliary pump to power the attachments.

Davide Cerca, managing director and co-founder of Robustrack, said “We have been looking for an excavator that can offer the best experience for our customers.

Eurocomach machines deliver the optimum performance when it comes to hydraulic attachments.”

There are already some Eurocomach machines in the UK, imported by previous dealers including Mount Machinery and Exc@v8.

Robustrack marketing director Bobby Heslop added: “Our machines will be black, visually distinguishing them and giving owners a unique looking, as well as performing, machine.”



Doosan develops see-through shovel bucket



Korean machinery manufacturer Doosan Infracore has launched the industry's first 'transparent bucket' system for wheeled loaders.

Doosan uses cameras to relay images into the driver's cab of whatever is in front of the shovel bucket, eliminating a hazardous blind spot.

Doosan Infracore says that it is the first company in the world to develop and apply

a front projection function with the transparent bucket for construction machines and has applied for patents in Korea, North America, Europe and China.

The system records images in front of a wheeled loader with top and bottom front-loaded cameras. It shows the combined images on the cab monitor in real time using a curved projection method.

Doosan also suggests that there may be productivity benefits as well as safety benefits, if the driver can see what he or she is loading or unloading.

Doosan also has an around view monitor (AVM) system, relying 360-degree images around the machine and a rear warning system using ultrasonic sensors.



New 40-metre high-reach for Wooldridge Demolition



Surrey-based Wooldridge Demolition has taken delivery of its largest high-reach demolition excavator – a Volvo EC750EL with Kokurek 40-metre telescopic boom.

The specially-adapted machine, supplied by Volvo dealer SMT GB, can operate a three-tonne attachment at full height.

It has gone straight to work at Woodberry Down in London, for phase three of an urban regeneration scheme. Wooldridge

Demolition is clearing an old public house, high-rise blocks and a community centre to prepare the site for redevelopment.

Adding the high-reach EC750EL to the fleet gives the firm some spare capacity and the ability to take on bigger projects.

“Prior to the EC750EL, our highest reach came from a Volvo EC480DL with a Kokurek 24-metre boom,” said John Hickman, operations director of Wooldridge Demolition. “With the evolution of many urban regeneration projects, we needed to go higher.”

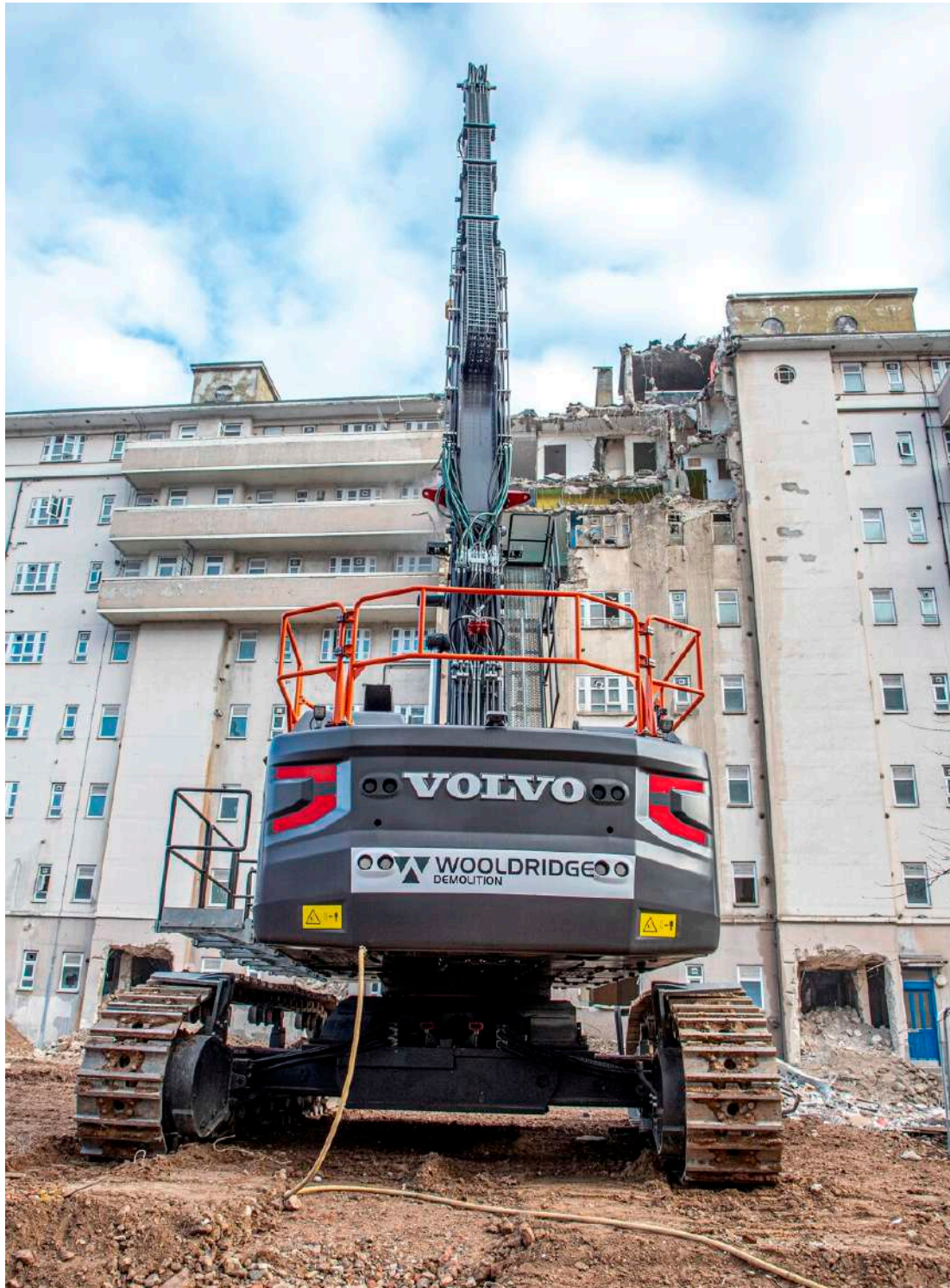
Wooldridge Demolition chose to use Volvo approved supplier Kocurek Excavators for the high-reach conversion, and in doing so, opted to build-in extra versatility with different front-end equipment.

In addition to the 40-metre telescopic boom, the contractor specified an 18-metre TAB configuration to work with an eight-tonne shear for low-level processing. It also requested a short lifting arm with 25-tonne lift capacity, and a Prolec rated capacity indicator.

The six-month conversion process saw the EC750EL undergo a series of engineering changes. In addition to construction of the new boom assemblies, each track frame was lengthened by one metre, to improve stability. The undercarriage was also given a telescopic frame, allowing the transport gauge to be increased from 2.75 metres (centre-to-centre of the 750mm track pads) to 4.41 metres.

A tilting cab assembly was installed, along with safety walkways, and the dust suppression system gave rise to a built-in pressure washer with retractable hose reel to help with machine cleanliness. Activation of the dust suppression system has been integrated into the attachment’s jaw control function, to reduce water consumption by only spraying when crushing.

The result is a high-reach machine that tips the scales at 102 tonnes equipped with its 18-metre TAB, or 107 tonnes when carrying the 40-metre telescopic boom. The high-reach boom also gives a forward reach of 19 metres from the centreline of the slew ring to the attachment pin.



Stoke to get first JCB Pothole Pro



Stoke-on-Trent City Council hosted trials while the PotholePro was in development last year and is now set to take delivery of the first machine in the next few weeks.

The Pothole Pro is an adapted Hydradig wheeled excavator, with tools for cutting and cleaning around potholes. It also has a hydraulic cropping tool, which the previous JCB Pothole Master, a modified 3CX backhoe loader, does not.

JCB claims that it can repair potholes four times quicker than standard methods.

Stoke councillor Daniel Jellyman, cabinet member for regeneration, infrastructure and heritage, said: “At a time when every penny counts for local authorities, we’re delighted to have been at the forefront of developing and trialling this new machine. We can’t wait to get our hands on it and put it to work on the city’s roads.”

JCB director Paul Murray said: “The council has been involved right from the very early stages of its creation. The team has worked with us throughout the development process and also took part in trials last year. They’ve clearly seen the benefits and believe in the machine which as manufacturers is great news.”

Stoke-on-Trent City Council’s machine will be supplied dealer Gunn JCB. Over the next three months, a fleet of PotholePros are being demonstrated to potential customers across the UK and Ireland, JCB said.



Chasetown invests £3m in excavators



Chasetown Civil Engineering's new machinery includes JCB 220X and 140X models as well as 3-, 5- and 8-tonne compact excavator models.

The order from the Burntwood, Staffordshire firm was placed with dealer Gunn JCB.

The contractor has also bought 12 new Leica machine control units and Leica surveying equipment, supplied by Boels Survey & Laser.

All the new JCB excavators were specified machine control ready, with base kits fitted in the factory, giving the flexibility to move control units from one machine to another as needed. The new system allows the engineering team to remotely monitor and upload data to the machines, reducing the need for site visits.

Chasetown Civil Engineering managing director Euan Grant said: "The X Series models are first class – we are delighted with their performance. Our operators love the smoothness of the controls, the strong performance and the comfort of the cabs, all adding up to a very efficient and productive excavator. The JCB and Leica technology works seamlessly to give us what we need."



Norplast's Digger Guard promises cab protection

Hitachi Construction Machinery UK has a new machine protection system available to customers.

Digger Guard is a new range of plastic security shields that wrap around the cabs of construction machinery when out of service to counter thieves and vandals. They are made from recyclable polymer materials.

Newcastle-based plastics manufacturer Norplast Ltd developed the patented Digger Guard in response to a project brief from Hitachi to design a vandal guard to overcome problems with existing systems used to protect excavator cabs.

With Hitachi as its first major customer, Norplast is overseeing the roll out of its Digger Guard products on models of excavator across the UK.



“The existing products on the market had a number of problems that Hitachi Construction Machinery wanted to improve upon,” said Norplast managing director Dave Smith. “They were difficult to install and remove, heavy and prone to wear, noisy, and not watertight when stored. It was clear to us that there was considerable room for improvement, and we delivered on that for Hitachi with Digger Guard.”

He added: “Construction industry machinery is exposed to extensive risk of costly damage both accidentally and through vandalism. With Digger Guard we have achieved improvements that we’re confident will save operators time on the job, and reduce both down-time and insurance costs.”

A Hitachi Construction Machinery spokesperson said: “Norplast successfully addressed every problem we originally set out for them to tackle. They’ve designed vandal guards for various models of our excavators and fit-test them at our sites as part of the service. We’re pleased to pass on the benefits of the Digger Guard system to our customers and end-user operators.”



Contracts Awarded

Graham wins £79.5m Clyde bridge contract



Councillors in Renfrewshire have approved the award of the £79.5m construction contract for the first opening road bridge over the River Clyde.

The Clyde Waterfront & Renfrew Riverside project will be carried out by Graham, with the contract due to be finalised later this month following conclusion of the procurement process.

Above: Graham's design partners are Ramboll and Amey

Centrepiece of the project is a twin-leaf swing bridge for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians crossing between Renfrew and the boundary between Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire.

The project, which will create new connections into Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS), is jointly funded by the UK and Scottish governments through the £1.13bn Glasgow City Region city deal. It will support about 700 jobs during its construction and generate hundreds of subcontract and supplier opportunities.

Leo Martin, managing director for Graham's civil engineering division, said: "We're delighted to have been chosen to deliver the Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside project, including the River Clyde bridge, with our design partners Ramboll and Amey.

"The new bridge will provide a gateway to the area's fast-growing manufacturing innovation district and help better connect communities with significant employment and development opportunities for what will be a transformational project for the Renfrewshire and Glasgow City regions.

"Graham are specialists in delivering complex civil engineering projects and our innovative construction solution will minimise the carbon impact, while we will utilise our knowledge and experience from previous landmark bridge construction and installations such as the Samuel Beckett Bridge in Dublin and Carpenters Land Bridge in Stratford to ensure this key infrastructure scheme is completed to the highest standards, while ensuring we deliver a sustainable legacy and positive impact."

Renfrewshire Council leader Iain Nicolson said: "We are delighted to have approved the awarding of this contract and look forward to working with civil engineering specialists

Graham and its project partners on what is a hugely significant project for Renfrewshire, the Glasgow City Region and indeed Scotland.

"We are excited by its potential in creating a vibrant attractive waterfront and connecting communities to their work, to hospitals and to education. Short-term, it will accelerate economic recovery from the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic by creating jobs and boosting opportunities for suppliers and in the long-term, the new infrastructure opens up access to development opportunities on both sides of the Clyde and will ensure the success of AMIDS, cementing Renfrewshire's position as the home of manufacturing innovation in Scotland."

All planning consent is in place; construction is scheduled to start in spring and take three years to complete, with the contract to be finalised later this month following conclusion of the procurement process.

Further Glasgow City Region City Deal funding is supporting Renfrewshire Council as it converts a 52-hectare site next to Glasgow Airport into the research and development centre for advanced manufacturing, AMIDS. Construction of the underpinning infrastructure is scheduled for completion this year and plans are progressing for a specialist carbon reducing district heating network, campus square and riverside green spaces. The district has already attracted £185m in infrastructure, research, innovation and skills facilities, with construction started on both the flagship National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS) headquarters facility and the Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre.



Funding approved for Fairham enabling works



The government has approved £83m of funding to accelerate the Fairham development in Nottingham.

Fairham is a planned £800m neighbourhood of 3,000 homes on the edge of Nottingham being delivered by Clowes Developments in partnership with Homes England.

Homes England acquired 250 acres of the 606-acre site in May 2019 and is working with Clowes Developments as master developer to deliver the primary infrastructure.

Winvic Construction won this work in September 2020. It is expected that construction of the housing will start this autumn.

The government has approved the release of £62m from Homes England's £1.3bn land assembly fund and a £21m loan to Clowes Developments from the Home Building Fund.

Gordon More, interim chief executive of Homes England, said: "This is a big milestone for Fairham and means that work can start in earnest. As the country starts to think about the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, large projects such as this not only meet a demand for high quality new homes but also support the housebuilding sector by creating a pipeline of work, providing much-needed stability."

Housing minister Christopher Pincher said: "This is fantastic for Nottinghamshire and the East Midlands not only because we are building 3,000 new homes but also for the boost this will give to jobs and the local economy. This is part of our mission to build back better from the pandemic and deliver the homes this country needs."

Clowes Developments land and planning director Robert Hepwood said: "This funding package from the government really helps us to make progress on site across Fairham and start to realise our vision of a green and distinctive new district for Nottingham."

"By working in partnership with public bodies we can now accelerate the delivery of new jobs and new homes for Nottinghamshire. We're sure that people will begin to see further progress on site throughout this year with our first new homes due to start construction in the autumn."

Muse picked to run £190m Horsham regen project



West Sussex County Council has selected Muse Developments as its preferred development partner to deliver Horsham Enterprise Park.

Horsham Enterprise Park comprises a new neighbourhood for the Sussex town as well as commercial space for a range of employment uses and extensive public realm. Construction is expected to take six years and cost £190m.

Above: How Horsham Enterprise Park might look

The site is the former Novartis Pharmaceuticals plant in Horsham. Original offices, laboratories and workshops are now mostly demolished but four buildings have been retained including two gatehouse buildings and a 1930s Art Deco style building.

The 18.5-acre Horsham Enterprise Park will deliver up to 270,000 sq ft of employment space, including offices, R&D facilities and an enterprise hub. There will be approximately 300 new houses/flats as well as local amenities.

Duncan Cumberland, development director at Muse Developments, said: “To receive the news that our submission to West Sussex County Council to deliver Horsham Enterprise Park had been successful, is testament to the hard work of everyone involved in the bid process. This is an exciting opportunity to create a thriving, sustainable place and we’re proud to have been selected.

“We’re looking forward to building on the excellent work undertaken to date by West Sussex County Council and working with them and the community to strengthen our relationship and bring forward a masterplan to drive inward investment and community wealth to leave a long-lasting, positive legacy.”

Lee Harris, executive director for place services at West Sussex County Council, said: “This is an exciting milestone in making our vision for Horsham Enterprise Park a reality. Muse has more than 30 years’ experience in developing mixed-use schemes across the UK and importantly, they have a strong focus on delivering sustainable projects, which will be evident in the plans for Horsham Enterprise Park.

“It’s clear that Muse share our vision for the design of flexible and modern workspaces to support local businesses as part of a mixed-use community incorporating a range of high-quality homes. We’re looking forward to working with them to deliver our ambitions for Horsham Enterprise Park.”

The next stage will see Muse, part of the Morgan Sindall group, prepare a reserved matters planning application to Horsham District Council in late autumn for the first phase of homes, following a community consultation exercise.



Northumberland Line £40m stations contract out to tender

Northumberland County Council is advertising for a construction contractor to build six new railway stations.

The £162m Northumberland Line rail project is set to bring passenger trains back into service between Ashington and Newcastle.



Above: Northumberland CC image of Bedlington

Aecom and SLC Rail have been working on plans for the county council since 2018.

The county council is now looking for a contractor to build the six stations on a framework basis. New stations at Northumberland Park, Newsham, Bedlington and Ashington are in phase one of the project, with construction work expected to start in summer 2022.

Additional stations at Seaton Delaval and Blyth Bebside are in phase two, which could start in 2024

The scope of the £40m stations contract includes the construction of six stations and car parks, including associated infrastructure.

The framework agreement will be based on the NEC4 Framework contract. Call-off contracts will be issued under the NEC4 Professional Services Contract (PSC) and Engineering and Construction Contract (ECC).

The tender documentation can be obtained from www.procontract.due-north.com reference number DN532422.

Modular builder plans Southend development



Modular housing company Ilke Homes has acquired a 14.5-acre site in Southend-on-Sea for up to 225 affordable homes.

Subject to planning consent, the houses will be manufactured offsite at Ilke Homes' 250,000 sq ft factory in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire.

Acting as a full ‘turnkey’ developer, Ilke Homes will manage the entire development process – from securing the land and gaining planning permission, to developing the site and delivering the homes. It hopes to be on site in Southend in the summer of 2022 and is negotiating a sale deal with a housing association.

As part of the company’s volumetric development offering, launched last year, Ilke Homes is already well on its way to deliver 1,000 homes for a mix of clients including the UK’s largest housing associations and institutional investors, as well as local councils.

The Southend-on-Sea site is the second that Ilke Homes has secured in Essex so far this year, as it looks to grow its portfolio in the southeast. In January, it announced that it had secured a 15-acre site in Stanford-le-Hope, Thurrock.

Last week former Crest Nicholson chief executive Stephen Stone – who led the stock market flotation of Crest Nicholson in 2013 – was appointed to Ilke’s board by its private equity investors.

Piling starts for Colne Valley Viaduct



HS2 contractors have begun work this week on the UK’s longest railway bridge.

Piling has begun for the foundations for the 3.4km-long Colne Valley Viaduct. Nearly 300 piles are being bored to support the viaduct, which will carry the new high-speed rail line across a series of lakes and waterways on the northwest outskirts of London.

Above: With spans of up to 80 metres long, the structure will be supported by 56 piers

It will be almost 1km longer than the Forth Rail Bridge and carry trains expected to travel at speeds of up to 200mph.

With spans of up to 80 metres long, the structure will be supported by 56 piers, carrying the railway around 10 metres above the surface of the lakes, the River Colne and the Grand Union Canal.

HS2's main works contractor for this section is Align JV – comprising Bouygues, Sir Robert McAlpine and VolkerFitzpatrick. Its design team comprises the engineers Jacobs and Ingerop-Rendel, and the architect Grimshaw.

The piling work is being carried out by a joint venture of Keller and VSL International (KVJV), which has a £167m contract with Align for geotechnical work as part of the C1 package on HS2.

The main deck of the viaduct will be built in sections at a temporary factory nearby before being assembled from north to south.

Align project director Daniel Altier said: “I have no doubt that the viaduct will become one, if not the most striking element of HS2 phase 1 once complete. The way it will be constructed is going to be equally fascinating for engineers young and old. The sections for the deck will be fabricated at our main construction site to the west of London just inside the M25, and using a huge launching girder, the deck will be formed from north to south, along the line of the route, thereby keeping unnecessary construction traffic off the roads.”



Above: Crossing the River Colne

A programme of test piling has already been completed with engineers sinking 12 piles at two locations with geological and structural data from these tests fed back into the design of the viaduct. This has resulted in a 10-15% reduction in the depth of the piles and associated time and cost savings. The deepest piles are going down 55 metres.



Tilbury Douglas starts Preston oncology Ward

Tilbury Douglas (formerly Interserve Construction) has started work on a new cancer treatment facility at Royal Preston Hospital in Lancashire.

The Ribblesdale Oncology Ward will have 24 beds and offer improved surroundings for patients. The £1.9m project is expected to be completed by September this year.

Under its former name of Interserve Construction (it changed its name at the beginning of this month), Tilbury Douglas put in a new ward, Ward 5, at the hospital last year to support

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's response to the coronavirus crisis.

Phil Shaw, divisional director at Tilbury Douglas, said: "The Tilbury Douglas team at the Royal Preston Hospital did an exemplary job delivering Ward 5 at short notice. The award of the Ribblesdale Oncology Ward project demonstrates the Trust's confidence in our expertise and capabilities to support the NHS. We are looking forward to starting on site and delivering this vital facility for patients and the local community."



Winvic to build three million square feet for Jaguar Land Rover



Winvic Construction has been awarded a contract to build a global parts logistics centre for Jaguar Land Rover in Leicestershire.

IM Properties has given Winvic Construction the follow-on job of build five huge steel-frame warehouses, totalling 2.94 million sq ft, at its Mercia Park in Leicestershire. Winvic has does enabling works.

Above: CGI of Jaguar Land Rover's planned parts centre at Mercia Park

The five industrial units will be leased to Jaguar Land Rover, making this the UK's largest single occupier logistics park.

It is also Winvic's largest industrial facility to date.

Two of the sheds are a million square feet – 514 metres long, 181 metres wide and 18 metres high. Two are 300,000 sq ft and one is 200,000 sq ft.

Unusual project challenges so far have included designing the link building slabs to withstand adjacent warehouse racking leg loads and ensuring the structural frame can tolerate enhanced loading in block stacking areas.

The Winvic team started works on this contract Monday 15th February and the project is expected to be handed over in September 2022.

However, Winvic has been on site at the northwest Leicestershire logistics park site – close to Junction 11 of the M42 – since last year, delivering a £21m civils and infrastructure contract for IM Properties.

In addition to the industrial facilities, Winvic will also be delivering associated works including the construction of five yards and car parks accommodating more than 2,300 vehicles. Surface and foul water drainage installation, and external services will also be put in, including underground connections between the completed infrastructure works and each individual unit.

Winvic was also engaged in November by DSV Group to design, construct and partially fit out its new facility at Mercia Park, which comprises a warehouse, cross-dock terminal and three-storey office building.

Winvic director Danny Nelson, head of industrial, said: “We have been on an incredible journey with IM Properties to date, working on numerous projects, but schemes of this nature don’t come around too often and so Mercia Park is one we are very proud to be a part of. To be selected by IM Properties as the delivery partner on a project of this size, scale and importance is testament to the relationship that has been cultivated over many years and that we continue to be market leaders in the sector. Our investment in people, technologies and forward-thinking approaches to construction puts Winvic in the ideal position to support the green commitments made by IM Properties and we’re looking forward to constructing our largest industrial facility to date – at almost three million sq ft – for IMP and end user, UK automotive pioneer, Jaguar Land Rover.”

IM Properties project director Jason Jasper said: “This is not only the largest single occupier deal ever to be agreed and funded but a major planning, construction and project delivery accomplishment. We’ve taken a 238-acre site from zero to development ready in four years. Typically a scheme of this scale would be delivered in separate phases over a five-to-10-year period. After years of investment and hard work, it will be exciting to see all six buildings come out of the ground at the same time. We have worked hard with Winvic and our supply chain to manage the logistical challenges that comes with building this volume at the same time together with managing a phased handover of the development to JLR.”



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