

Spanish engineer Sener eyes UK expansion

The Spanish engineering giant bidding in joint venture for a lead role on HS2 - Sener - is eyeing up further work in the UK on HS2, Crossrail 2 and in the aviation sector, writes Yoosof Farah.

Speaking exclusively to Building, Sener business development director Jesús Planchuelo said the €1.3bn-turnover (£950m) firm was targeting growth in the UK infrastructure sector.

The firm already has 200 employees in the UK, but is targeting "significant" further expansion, Planchuelo said.

Planchuelo confirmed that Sener is bidding for the £350m route-wide engineering delivery partner (EDP) role for phase one of HS2 in a joint venture with Atkins and CH2M.

As revealed by Building last month, this joint venture and a rival Bechtel-Jacobs consortium are thought to be the frontrunners for the high-profile role, with formal invitations to tender to be issued by client HS2 Ltd this month.

Sener is a 6,000-strong



High-speed line between Figueres and Perpignan, as worked on by Sener

engineering consultant and posted a £49m pre-tax profit in the 2014 calendar year, up from £16m the previous year.

The firm's main UK office is in Manchester, but it also has an aeronautics division with offices in Lincoln, Rugby, Whetstone, York

and West Sussex.

But Planchuelo said the firm's main focus in the UK will be opportunities in the infrastructure market, particularly rail.

Planchuelo said: "We'll go for opportunities where we feel we can add something different to what's

already in the market."

Sener already has extensive experience in high-speed rail, having been involved in several high-speed rail projects in Spain, as well as the planned \$68.4bn (£45bn) California high-speed rail line in joint ventures with firms including Spanish contractor Dragados.

It was also recently the sole winner of a \$60m (£40m) contract on the high-speed project in California to provide the preliminary design for 45 miles of the line from Palmdale to Burbank.

Planchuelo added that Sener will look at opportunities in the aviation market in the UK where Spanish contractors are involved.

Spanish firm Ferrovial, a major shareholder at Heathrow Airport, was appointed to the airport's contractor framework to carry out non-terminal related work on the airport's northern half as part of Heathrow's £1.5bn programme of works until 2019.

Jacobs named MD of Wilson James

Logistics and security specialist Wilson James has appointed Peter Jacobs as managing director of its construction and integrated solutions business.

The former managing director of Morgan Sindall's London and Airports division and president of the Chartered Institute of Building joined Wilson James as a non-executive board director last year.

Jacobs joined Morgan Sindall from Bovis Lend Lease in 2011, where he had headed the team behind the London 2012 athletes' village.

Jacobs said: "I am delighted to join Wilson James as managing director of the construction logistics and integrated solutions business. Logistics has always been critical to the successful delivery of complex construction projects."

McCarthy & Stone expands regional presence

Retirement housebuilder McCarthy & Stone has expanded its reach across the UK with three new offices in the North-west, South-west and East Midlands.

The firm is strengthening its regional presence to spearhead sales and land acquisition in the areas, with the new openings taking the number of regional offices to nine.

The news follows the successful launch of McCarthy & Stone's north London region last summer, which was the firm's first new regional office for 14 years. Since its launch, the north London team has achieved 16 land exchanges and made significant progress selling off-plan at its first development in Southend, which takes first occupations in November 2015.

Sisk-Lagan joint venture wins £40m Tyneside road upgrade job

A joint venture between John Sisk & Son and Lagan Construction has won a £40m deal to upgrade the A19/A1058 Coast Road in North Tyneside.

Part of the government's £1.5bn investment to improve the UK's road network over the next six years, the project will see the existing grade separated roundabout upgraded to a three-level interchange.

The scheme will also provide two new shared-use bridges over the A1058 slip roads to

improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Work is expected to start in spring 2016 and be open to traffic by summer 2018.

Roads minister Andrew Jones said: "Through schemes like these we are building the northern powerhouse and creating opportunities for hard-working people across Britain.

"The appointment of the contractors is a vital part of the delivery of improvements to the A19/A1058 Coast Road in North Tyneside. It will make journeys

better for local people ensuring they have easy access to jobs, shops and leisure facilities nearby."

Highways England assistant project manager Darlene Procter said: "This scheme will improve journey times on the A19 by reducing congestion and improving safety for the thousands of drivers that use this junction each day.

"Providing better infrastructure will help the local and national economy, helping to support businesses and creating jobs."