

K Home grows from strength to strength



Above, K Home International's Qatalum project team. Below, applying 3D modelling design.

As his family-owned business celebrates 35 years of impressive growth, K Home International's (KHI) CEO **Andy Home** discusses some of the factors that have contributed to this success and will continue to fuel KHI's ambitious drive for further substantial growth.

SO, WHEN much of the global Construction Industry is reeling from the impact of the credit crunch, how has KHI managed to buck the trend?

AH: We are fortunate to be involved in providing our engineering, procurement and construction management services to those industrial sectors that remain buoyant and largely unaffected by the credit squeeze, such as the oil and gas, chemical, pharmaceutical, petrochemical and metal processing sectors.

We are as busy as we have ever been, measured by whatever key performance indicator you wish to take, which provides us with a very strong platform. We are now investing in an ambitious expansion of our business over the next three years and beyond, both here in the UK and in a number of overseas markets.

I would like to stress that a significant share of our UK business will continue to be generated on Teesside, but we are delighted to report that we are also experiencing increased demand from customers based in the South East and North West of England.

Where do you see most of this growth coming from?

AH: In simple terms, through an expansion of our involvement in those markets in which



we are currently active, which themselves are forecast to grow.

We see significant opportunities in the oil and gas sector, particularly from those companies operating in UK Continental Shelf oil fields. KHI has ongoing relationships with a number of major UK operators as well as the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, and has developed a niche capability in international drilling projects.

Much of this success can be attributed to our expertise in PDMS 3D modelling, which has enabled us to minimise the potential for clashes and the need for on-site reworks.

We have also developed a niche in supporting the design and construction of aluminium primary smelting projects and downstream processing plants, such as rolling mills and extrusion facilities. KHI is currently involved in a major aluminium smelter project in Qatar and is undertaking a number of studies for similarly large projects in Oman, the UAE with future potential projects in Norway, Iceland and Newfoundland.

In terms of the chemical and petrochemical sectors, we are fully committed to enhancing our support to the UK process industry and, in particular, members of the North East Chemical Cluster. We are currently working with many of the established Teesside operators, including Lucite, Croda, Artenius, GrowHow, Johnson Matthey, Tioxide, Invista and Yara. This sector will continue to generate an important proportion of our future workload.

Another sector that offers real growth potential for KHI is pharmaceuticals. We have already experienced success with Novartis and Genzyme and we are in the process of expanding our in-house expertise by recruiting individuals with experience of working in a tightly regulated industry. This will provide us with the resources needed to increase our penetration of this key growth sector.

We've read about your involvement in a number of prestige infrastructure projects in Dubai. What else are you planning for the Middle East?

AH: The Middle East will provide significant

opportunities for KHI over the next few years and we are in the process of strengthening our Dubai office with the addition of an engineering capability to our existing project and construction management resources.

In addition to infrastructure developments, significant opportunities in the oil and gas, petrochemical and metals sectors in Dubai, Oman, Bahrain, and Qatar are already presenting themselves.

What do you think are the vital ingredients of KHI's success?

AH: What sets KHI apart from most of its main competitors is that it is, and will remain, a privately-owned company. We are not encumbered with enormous bureaucracies or rigid procedures. That means that we are significantly more flexible, enabling us to stay light on our feet and respond much more quickly and effectively to the changing needs of our customers.

As those who work with us will tell you, our ethos is to create a real family environment where everybody feels valued.

But what about the much-discussed skills shortage – won't this constrain your growth plans?

AH: Finding the right people is never easy and we have ongoing recruitment process to increase the number of core staff and contractors at all levels and in all project functions.

More importantly, we continue to be totally committed to training all of our people, from apprentices to senior managers to support their continuous personal development and provide them with the skills needed to ensure that KHI retains its edge in an increasingly competitive world.

● For further information, contact K Home International Ltd on (01642) 765421 or visit www.khomeint.com