

10.05.2021 **CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PRAISED FOR TANGIBLE PROGRESS ON NET ZERO AT B7 SUMMIT**

Speaking at today's virtual **Business 7 Summit** (or 'B7'), which welcomes around 60 CEO's from leading UK and global companies across the G7 countries, and feeds into the **G7 Summit** programme, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, **Kwasi Kwarteng**, recognised the construction industry's contribution to achieving Net Zero.

In remarks to the concluding session, which aimed to identify how government and business can work together to address global challenges in climate, digital and health, the Secretary of State set out his priorities and views on business leadership, highlighting that over 58 UK construction businesses have already signed-up to **Race to Zero**, including firms such as **Lendlease** and **Multiplex**.

The Secretary of State also highlighted the UK's leading consultancy businesses working in the built environment, who have today collectively committed to offering ambitious design options and advice that are fully compatible with Net Zero outcomes to their clients. This means that the expert advice received by financiers, asset owners and operators will now be encouraging, and actively driving towards, ambitious Net Zero choices.

These firms are respected around the globe for their expertise and include **AECOM, Arcadis, Arup, Atkins, Buro Happold, Jacobs, Mott MacDonald, Mace, Turner & Townsend** and **WSP**.

Kwasi Kwarteng said: "The UK's construction and engineering industries are leading the world in the drive to cut emissions, and I am thrilled to see so many businesses from all over the globe share this ambition.

"As we build back better, the commitments made at this summit will support the construction industry to make this essential low carbon transition and I look forward to working closely with the sector and the Construction Leadership Council on this journey."

Hannah Vickers, chief executive of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE) and CO₂nstructZero lead at the CLC said: "I'm delighted to see ACE members among those demonstrating the leadership required if our industry is to play its part in helping society to meet its ambitious Net Zero targets.

"The UK's leading global consultancy businesses are well advanced in achieving Net Zero on their direct emissions. In order to deliver significant reductions to society's carbon emissions, these firms are now also committing to proactively shaping their clients' decisions and approach. This means that more projects will start out with Net Zero at their core, delivering a positive knock-on effect along the entire construction supply chain."

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Supportive quotes:

Colin Wood, AECOM's chief executive for Europe, said: "The pandemic has focused minds on making the world a better place, building back better and greener, and targeting Net Zero. But for this momentum to create a sustainable legacy we must collaborate, we must innovate, and we must demonstrate leadership. That's why AECOM is proud to support CO₂nstructZero.

"At AECOM, we're embedding sustainable development across all our work, setting ambitious targets of operational net zero by the end of 2021, and Science Based net zero by 2030, something we cannot achieve in isolation. Through programmes such as CO₂nstructZero we can share best practice, discuss key issues and work with our supply chain, our partners and our clients, helping organisations across the built environment reach ambitious carbon targets."

Mark Cowlard, CEO Arcadis UK and Ireland, said: "The most pressing issue currently facing our clients, and planet, is climate change. We know it's not an easy problem to solve, but this is an opportunity for change, leadership, collaboration and innovation. "

"At Arcadis, we are committed to placing sustainability at the heart of everything we do. We are proud to be business champions for CO₂nstructZero, working together with the built environment and infrastructure sectors to make Net Zero a reality."

Alan Belfield, global chair of the Arup group, said: "Arup is very much part of the Race to Zero and is fully committed to becoming a Net Zero firm by 2030. We also recognise that we can achieve so much more by working with partners and clients across the built environment supply chain. That is why we are working with our own clients in finance, business and government to shape the transition strategies we need, as well as collaborating with organisations such as the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation to shape the policies and programmes that will drive rapid progress around the globe.

"No single government or group is going to be able to meet the climate change challenge, but everyone can play their part – and the construction sector can achieve more than most."

Richard Robinson CEO, Atkins UK and Europe, said: "Atkins has a proud history of working with clients to reduce carbon and build climate resilient infrastructure. As we look ahead to the significant challenge of achieving net zero, the engineering consulting sector has a crucial role to play both to identify practical pathways towards the goal and to provide the best innovation and the most efficient delivery to ensure we get there."

Sarah Prichard, UK managing director, Buro Happold, said: "Buro Happold has recognised the need to help lead in the engineering response to Net Zero and the Climate Emergency, as we work to create a sustainable and equitable future for people, places and planet. Working with the CLC on the CO₂nstructZero campaign will enable us to achieve this collaboratively across the industry.

"Buro Happold are committed to measuring embodied and operational carbon on all projects we design, both new build and retrofit. We have created in-house building performance dashboards to allow us to report on modelled and measured carbon and have ambitious targets around driving down in use and embodied carbon in our work over the next ten years. In regularly reporting and holding ourselves accountable to our people and the wider industry as we strive to achieve these, we hope to inspire other organisations to join us on this journey."



Donald Morrison, Jacobs people & places solutions senior vice president

Europe and digital strategies, said: "Greater collaboration is vital for transformational action on climate change. The focus must now be on 'enabling delivery' together through innovation, sustainable policy and investment frameworks, and outcomes-based solutions that seek to balance all our environmental, societal and economic needs.

"As a signatory to the United Nations' Race to Zero campaign and the Business Ambition for 1.5°C commitment, Jacobs achieved Net Zero Carbon in 2020 for our operations and business travel, and we are now focused on our long-term goal to be carbon negative by 2030. Yet we recognize that our greatest opportunity to affect climate change comes from helping our clients integrate sustainable, low-carbon solutions into their own operations."

Cathy Travers, managing director, Mott MacDonald UK & Europe said: "There is already practical guidance and knowhow that the leaders in our industry are applying to achieve major carbon reductions. The immediate challenge is to replicate best practice across the entire industry, while the innovations required to move from low carbon to zero carbon are developed, proved and scaled. We've been working to cut carbon for 25 years. We understand what it takes to get to net-zero and we know that it is possible, but it requires collective effort with every organisation playing their part."

Lydia Parnell, global corporate social responsibility lead, Turner & Turner, said: "We are delighted that the Secretary of State has recognised our industry for its collective commitment to Net Zero. It has never been more important or more urgent to demonstrate our ability to collaborate and transform our industry and tackle the climate emergency head on.

"At Turner & Townsend, we are integrating the climate agenda into our entire service offer, developing digital tools to support this move and investing in specialist expertise to design out carbon at every stage of the asset lifecycle. We are particularly proud of our work on retrofitting; making sure that existing built assets are fit for the future.

"As a company, we have set verified Science-based Targets and have invested in natural climate solutions that will see us become Net Zero by 2030 at the latest. Our strategy meets the criteria for the Race to Net Zero commitment making us one of very few that have not only made the commitment, but have a verified strategy to make it happen."

Mark Naysmith, CEO WSP UK & MEIA, said: "The UK is leading the world with its net zero targets and consultancy firms will play an important role in supporting the Government deliver these by 2050. Climate change poses the most serious challenge to us as a society and decarbonising the built environment will be crucial if we are to limit its impact on the way we live.

"The commitments made at today's summit complement WSP's own commitment to halve the carbon footprint of all designs and advice provided to clients by 2030, and we look forward to working collaboratively with industry and government to make these a reality."



Notes to editors:

- Find out more about the B7 Summit: www.g7uk.org/business-7/
- Find out more about CO₂nstructZero at the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) website: www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk
- The CO₂nstructZero Programme Board, chaired by Hannah Vickers, CEO of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering, is responsible for oversight of the whole CO₂nstructZero agenda, including the performance framework and reporting.
- The broader CLC Taskforce provides support to the CO₂nstructZero programme and a network to test, engage and cascade advice to the broader construction supply chain across the UK.
- The commitment made today is part of the CLC's CO₂nstructZero industry change programme, Priority 8 - Become world leaders in designing out carbon. This explores developing the capability of our designers and construction professionals to design in line with the circular economy and a shifting of commercial models to reward measurable carbon reduction.