

Further expansion at Parkegate Engineering

As UK-based Parkegate Engineering enters into its tenth year of trading, its run- away success as a leading international supplier of specialist services, plant and modernisation capabilities to the flat rolled aluminium sector has led to further expansion.



Work roll chock strip and build equipment designed by Parkegate Engineering

Parkegate Engineering, based in Poole on the South Coast of England, is a supplier of specialist services to the ferrous and non-ferrous metals industries. Of especial importance is the company's involvement in the design and supply of rolling mill and process line equipment. Since the organisation was set up in April, 1996, by four senior engineers, previously in the employ of Davy International, the business has burgeoned.

Today, as Parkegate enters into its tenth year of trading, the firm is riding on the crest of a wave, with a good order backlog and excellent sales prospects. To a large extent, this reflects the buoyancy of the aluminium industry, to which the fortunes of Parkegate are closely tied. Last year, the proportion of orders from the aluminium sector represented 50% of the company's business.

During May, the organisation will relocate from its headquarters building in Winchester Place, Poole, to new and larger premises at Christchurch Aviation Park West. The new building on the perimeter of Bournemouth International Airport will provide significant additional office space to allow for the planned growth of the company. Additionally, there will be an inwards bay for small goods receipt and dispatch..

Another indication of the increasing demand for its services is Parkegate's decision to invest in new 3D CAD systems, including both hardware and software. At the same time, the company is seeking to recruit additional Engineers to strengthen its team when it moves to Christchurch.

Recent contracts

As the organisation has expanded its involvement into the downstream end of the rolling mill process, the list of prestigious projects has continued to grow.

Very recently, Parkegate received a purchase order from IAS to upgrade the 921 single-stand Hunter cold mill at Norandal Huntingdon, TN, USA. The contract included the integration of new actuators for automatic shape and gauge control, as well as the supply

of mechanical and hydraulic equipment including a new entry bridle, AGC position transducers, a dry strip package, ironing roll controls and exit coil car modifications. This order was subsequently followed by a second order for an almost identical scope to upgrade the No.5 Foil Mill at Norandal Salisbury, NC, USA, again in conjunction with IAS.

Again, in the USA, Parkegate have recently completed a project based on the supply of manufacturing drawings to a prominent roller of magnesium who is seeking to improve the belt wrapper performance of a cold mill. Once the manufacture is complete, Parkegate will supervise the installation and recommissioning of the plant.

There is also no shortage of orders placed by UK companies within the aluminium industry. A typical example has been the widening of the tandem warm mill at Bridgnorth. This project also included the upgrading of a coil mill, which involved the installation of a Mas-Roll cleaning roll. This was the first example of this technology being incorporated in an aluminium rolling mill in Europe.

Parkegate have also completed several schemes for Novelis UK, including a major revamp one of the client's cold mills, enabling it to produce a heavier-gauge product. The scope includes new coil preparation, cross-cut shears and a beltwrapper plus, pinch roll modifications

A project undertaken on behalf of Dolgarrog Aluminium has involved a major two-high hot mill upgrade, including stiffening and re-scheduling of the mill, together with the supply of new chocks, scratch brushes, new drive spindles and larger work rolls. Of especial interest was the provision of a new gearbox for the main mill drive. This item of equipment, the largest ever supplied by Parkegate, weighed over 54 tonnes. The upgrade has allowed Dolgarrog to roll down to the same finishing gauge with approximately 20%



Senior staff at Parkegate Engineering include, left to right, Malcolm Townend, Engineering Director; John Meaden, Technical Director; Neil Winkley, Managing Director, and Mark Bumford, Associate Sales Director



Parkegate designed this rapid work roll change rig

fewer passes than previously required.

During 2004, the company also undertook a process route engineering study for Hydro Aluminium. This resulted in a number of recommendations, the final outcome of which was the upgrade of a hot mill and the purchase of a new cold mill. Another study, carried out on behalf of Sapa in Sweden, covered an upgrade to their hot mill shear and scrap handling system.

Another sign of Parkegate's ever-growing stature is its ability to undertake an increasing proportion of turnkey projects. A typical example, although not in the context of aluminium, was the supply of a complete hot-dip galvanising line to a client in Vietnam. The total line was built at a cost of over £10 million. The Parkegate scope included the design and supply of all the line's terminal equipment, including accumulators, and coil handling systems, in-line skin pass mill, and



Crop handling equipment supplied by Parkegate

tension leveller. Parkegate also drew up the necessary scheme for the complete line layout and coordination of the line drives and automation, together with the integration of the welder, furnaces, zinc pot and chemical coater.

Second-hand plant sales

In recent years, Parkegate have become increasingly involved in the sale of second-hand plant, ranging from single machines to complete processing plants. Amongst a range of equipment currently on offer are a two-stand tandem mill, a continuous caster, and a selection of ferrous rolling mills. An additional advantage that Parkegate has over-used plant agents is the company's ability to offer upgrading services with respect to second-hand plant, thereby offering the latest specifications at very attractive prices.

Parkegate has also set up a dedicated resource



Cold mill belt wrapper

to handle spares, a section of the business which continues to grow. A typical example of this specialist service was the recent supply of chocks for a cold mill operated by Corus Aluminium — a mill that was built by another supplier before Parkegate was formed.

It has been demonstrated that the services offered by Parkegate Engineering — including project concept analysis, process engineering studies, proposal engineering and plant specification, design and detail engineering, manufacturing, site installation, project management and the provision of used plant and spares — is exactly what the metals industry, and the aluminium sector looks for. Having been responsible for many of the major revamps of aluminium rolling equipment carried out in the UK in recent years, it is not surprising that Parkegate has decided to expand its design and engineering base.

Reader Reply No.52