

RM2.40 - BUY

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Malaysia Infrastructure

Reuters	SCOG.KL
Bloomberg	SCGB MK

Priced on 17 November 2017 KLSE Comp @ 1.721.7

12M hi/lo RM2.4	40/1.59
12M price target	RM2.80
±% potential	+17%
Shares in issue	1,292.9m
Free float (est.)	45.6%
Market cap	US\$743m
3M average daily	volume
RM4.0m	(US\$1.0m)
Foreign s'holding	9.0%

Major shareholders

Sunway Berhad 54.4% Sungei Way Corp Sdn Bhd 10.1%

Stock performance (%)



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It's day in the sun

Slow earnings traction in 3Q17 but visibility outshines

SunCon's 3Q17 earnings (core basis: +10% YoY and +17% QoQ) took 9M17 PATMI to 69%/71% of full-year CLSA/consensus estimates. Revenue recognition this quarter was again dragged down by slowing deliveries to property developers in the pre-cast business although this is more a matter of timing; YTD orders secured for this segment had jumped YoY. Overall, given RM2.9bn of RM4bn of contract hauls were only secured since September this year, some catch-up can be counted on in 4Q17. With a record order book, net cash position, and anchored by RM15bn of tender book, SunCon's prospects stay bright. We stay BUYers.

Second quarter of slowing revenues in pre-cast segment; timing issue

As in 2Q17, slow delivery of pre-cast products impinged on revenue (and also margins this quarter) and poses some downside risk to our forecasts. Orders YTD of RM163m are 42% higher than the RM115m in 2016, and revenue recognition should pick up in 2018. Suncon's Iskandar plant has been awarded a five-year pioneer status, which should nudge up post-tax margins from 2018 by about 2ppt from about 17% at present.

Record order book; tender book of RM15bn

SunCon's outstanding order book of a record RM6.8bn provides visibility of 2.9 times revenue for 2017 while YTD wins of RM4bn lead its peers'. Even so, we are reassured of its prospects with RM15bn in tender book, mainly from the infrastructure space. SunCon is interested in the East Coast Rail Link, Mass Rapid Transit Line 3, and High Speed Rail, among others.

Strong balance sheet for execution

With RM328m in net cash, and gross gearing that has improved further to 0.26 times (0.28 times in 2016), SunCon's balance sheet remains healthy to execute its upcoming projects, with project duration stretching to 4 years, and to make investments into the pre-cast business (committed RM58m). We note SunCon is relatively insulated from steel bar costs that have risen some 20% from June as steel forms only 3% of the total cost.

Maintain BUY

We reiterate BUY, with unchanged earnings/TP. SunCon's PE multiple would compress to 14.3x if based on 18CL. This is less demanding than its big-cap construction peers' multiples but above the industry average which is justified by its strong ROEs, proxy to infrastructure and strong revenue visibility.

Financials					
Year to 31 December	15A	16A	17CL	18CL	19CL
Revenue (RMm)	1,917	1,789	2,380	3,304	3,488
Net profit (RMm)	127	124	154	216	229
EPS (sen)	9.8	9.6	11.9	16.7	17.7
CL/consensus (12) (EPS%)	-	-	105	115	112
EPS growth (% YoY)	39.4	(2.9)	24.6	40.4	6.1
PE (x)	24.4	25.1	20.1	14.3	13.5
Dividend yield (%)	1.7	2.1	3.1	3.5	3.8
FCF yield (%)	6.2	1.8	3.9	7.2	5.5
PB (x)	6.9	6.3	5.6	4.7	4.0
ROE (%)	30.6	26.2	29.5	35.8	32.2
Net debt/equity (%)	(56.2)	(66.7)	(65.0)	(72.9)	(70.4)
Source: CLSA					

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Figure 1

SunCon's financials							
FYE 31 Dec (RM m)	3Q17	3Q16	YoY % Chg	3Q17	2Q17	QoQ % Chg	Remarks
Revenue	491.4	381.1	29%	491.4	417.2	18%	In 3Q17, RM472m or 96% of revenues stemmed from construction
Operating expenses	(453.0)	(348.8)	30%	(453.0)	(380.5)	19%	
Other income	4.0	7.3	(45%)	4.0	5.0	(20%)	
Ebitda	52.1	49.5	5%	52.1	50.9	2%	
Depreciation	(9.7)	(9.9)	(3%)	(9.7)	(9.1)	6%	
Ebit	42.4	39.6	7%	42.4	41.7	2%	
Interest income	2.6	3.3	(20%)	2.6	2.3	13%	
Interest expense	(2.0)	(2.4)	(19%)	(2.0)	(1.3)	55%	
Pre-tax profit	43.1	40.4	7%	43.1	42.8	1%	QoQ, 1% contraction in absence of arbitration gain (RM2.9m in 2Q17) and reversal of provisions in 2Q17 (RM2.7m) compounded by impairments losses in 3Q17 on long-dated receivables of RM2.1m
Tax	(8.6)	(9.1)	(6%)	(8.6)	(6.1)	42%	
Effective tax rate	20.0%	22.6%		20.0%	14.2%		
Minority interest	(0.1)	0.1		(0.1)	(0.1)		
Net profit	34.6	31.1	11%	34.6	36.8	(6%)	On a core profit basis, the net profit for 2Q17 represented a gain of 10.3% YoY and 17% QoQ
EPS (sen)	2.61	2.41	8%	2.61	2.84	<mark>(8%)</mark>	
Ebit margin	8.6%	10.4%		8.6%	10.0%		
PBT margin	8.8%	10.6%		8.8%	10.3%		Margin for pre-cast concrete division slumped to 12% (historically 15-20%) due to low utilisation
FYE 31 Dec (RM m)	YTD3Q17	YTD3Q16	YoY % Chg				Remarks
Revenue	1,328.1	1,235.7	7%		contrib KVMRT I	ution from Line 2 and	t's revenue increased 17% YoY thanks to the building division, greater progress in Parcel F, Putrajaya. In contrast, revenue declined 41% YoY due to slower delivery
Operating expenses	(1,213.6)	(1,149.9)	6%				
Other income	11.6	26.8	(57%)				
Ebitda	154.1	142.0	9%				
Ebitda margin	11.6%	11.5%	1%				
Depreciation	(28.0)	(29.5)	(5%)				
Ebit	126.2	112.5	12%				
Interest income	8.1	8.0	1%				
Interest expense	(4.3)	(4.5)	(5%)				
Pre-tax profit	130.0	116.0	12%				
Tax	(24.2)	(24.4)	(1%)				
Effective tax rate	18.6%	21.0%					
Minority interest	(0.2)	0.2					
Net profit	106.0	91.5	16%				
EPS (sen)	8.2	7.07	16%				

Source: CLSA, SunCon

Ebit margin

PBT margin

Record job wins and order book; believe some catch up is likely in 4Q17 in earnings As it stands, SunCon's order book of RM6.8bn is its highest ever, thanks to its impressive haul of RM2.2bn for the Light Rail Transit Line 3, with the total tally of job wins this year RM4bn (double that of guidance). Other notable

Construction segment's PBT margin broadened to 8.7% from

9.5%

9.8%

9.1%

9.4%

7.3%, helped by arbitration gain in India

wins up to November this year include the RM582m affordable housing project in the state of Kelantan. That both these projects have been only secured since September 2017 suggests that revenue recognition for its construction segment could pick-up in 4Q17.

Pre-tax margin by business segment

Figure 3

45.0%

Source: CLSA, SunCon



Pre-tax profit by construction and pre-cast product segments



Source: CLSA, SunCon

40.0% 38.2% 36.5 35.0% 30.0% 23.0% 25.0% 20.9% 22.8% 24.2% 20.09 20.0% 15.0% 15.3%% 10.0% 7.0% 5.9% 5.0% 4.4% 0.0% 1Q16 4Q16 2Q17 2016 3016 1017 3015 4015 3017

- Construction



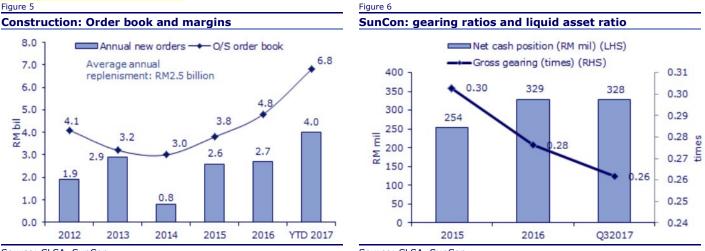
Source: CLSA, SunCon

Tender book RM15bn; future prospects remain bright, in our view SunCon's tender book valued at RM15bn mainly comprises infrastructure projects, forming the pipeline for future wins. Based on the requirements for Mass Rapid Transit Line 3 or circle line as a turnkey contractor, SunCon may require a joint venture if it is interested to participate. SunCon would also be interested in jobs on the East Coast Rail Link and the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail further in the future. For in-house job flows, we think SunCon may be able to count on hospital jobs from its parent as well as potential projects in the vicinity of the parent's Sunway Velocity development (subsequent to Sunway Berhad's land purchase there).



Net cash position with gross gearing further receding Given the jump in its order book, focus could increasingly shift to execution. Its balance sheet stays strong with a net cash position of RM328m as at end-September 2017 (essentially at similar levels to start of the year), while gross gearing even receded further to 0.26 times.

Reveals planned capital expenditure; we have factored a majority of this into our assumptions In 9M2017, capital expenditure added up to RM39m, in part due to automation of the Senai pre-cast products plant, and in part due to investments to carry out the LRT Line 3 project. Going forward, SunCon has revealed that it intends to invest up to RM58m in its pre-cast business, either for investment for the construction of an integrated construction prefabrication hub in Singapore (if it secures the tender) or for process improvements in plants locally.



Source: CLSA, SunCon

Eurther deceleration of revenue recognition; so long as orders keep growing, only a matter of recognition timing Source: CLSA, SunCon

Slow delivery of revenue despite growing orders in pre-cast concrete

Transmission of orders to delivery (and hence revenue recognition) has been slow in the pre-cast concrete segment. However, we think this is only a matter of timing. In terms of order growth, total pre-cast orders YTD of RM165m (Figure 7) represent a 41% increase over the RM115m achieved over the whole of the previous year. System-wide in Singapore, the number of flat units by the Housing and Development Board launched to date of 18,095 units has also exceeded the 17,891 units in 2016.

Revenue this quarter declined to RM20m from RM30m a quarter earlier, but outstanding order book edged up to RM260m



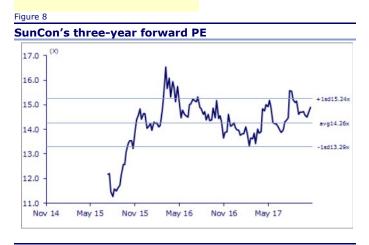


Newer Johor plant obtains tax pioneer status

SunCon announced that its pre-cast concrete plant in Iskandar has obtained a five-year pioneer status for tax. To recap, SunCon's total capacity for pre-cast concrete is 156,600 m³ per annum. Its Iskandar plant, the newer of the two, which had in 1Q17 added 4 production lines to 9 lines altogether, contributes essentially half the capacity (51%). Its effective tax rate for the pre-cast concrete business thus should drop in 2018 when SunCon activates the pioneer status. Roughly, we expect post-tax profit margins to improve by about 2ppt from around 17% at present from this effect alone.

Retain BUY

Trading below big caps but above industry average for FY18 SunCon is trading at 0.6SD above the three-year mean PE. We think its above industry average PE is justified by its strong ROEs and proven proxy to infrastructure projects, not to mention its revenue visibility on the back of a record high order book.





Source: CLSA evalu@tor

Source: CLSA evalu@tor

Figure 10

Construction peers co	Price	Mkt cap	PE		EPS Growth		РВ		ROE		Yield	
			CY17	CY18	CY17	CY18	CY17	CY18	CY17	CY18	CY17	CY18
			(x)	(x)	(%)	(%)	(x)	(x)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
KLCI-listed peers												
іјм мк	3.1	2,651	16.2	14.7	(5.4)	10.6	1.1	1.1	7.2	7.6	2.5	2.7
GAM MK	4.7	2,805	16.6	15.7	7.8	5.9	1.9	1.6	9.8	10.0	2.6	2.6
SCGB MK Equity	2.4	743	20.1	14.3	24.6	40.4	5.6	4.7	29.5	35.8	3.1	3.5
BHB MK Equity	0.4	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EVSD MK Equity	0.9	162	11.2	9.7	6.9	15.6	0.8	0.7	6.0	6.7	1.3	1.5
BIN MK Equity	0.4	22	7.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	-	-	5.3	4.9	-	0.0
HSL MK Equity	1.5	193	14.2	10.2	(14.2)	38.8	1.1	1.0	7.7	9.6	1.6	1.9
KICB MK Equity	2.4	183	10.8	9.2	(12.0)	18.2	1.3	1.1	12.3	13.2	2.3	2.6
MDJ MK Equity	1.1	149	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MUHI MK Equity	2.8	322	11.0	9.9	15.0	11.1	1.3	1.2	11.7	11.2	2.0	2.2
GKEN MK Equity	3.2	435	24.7	16.3	-	51.5	4.9	4.0	24.5	24.2	1.6	2.7
TRC MK Equity	0.7	83	11.0	10.1	38.3	9.2	0.8	0.8	7.3	7.8	2.8	3.2
WCTHG MK Equity	1.7	562	16.0	14.7	19.5	8.7	0.8	0.8	5.0	5.4	1.7	1.8
GADG MK Equity	1.1	181	8.2	7.3	4.5	13.5	1.2	1.1	15.1	14.8	2.8	2.4
Weighted average			16.0	14.0	4.9	14.3	1.9	1.6	10.9	11.7	2.3	2.6
Weighted average ex.	IJM & GA	м	15.2	11.8	11.0	24.9	2.6	2.2	15.2	16.9	2.0	2.4

Source: CLSA (for the rated stocks), Bloomberg (for the rest)

Valuation details

We value SunCon using the price-earnings multiple approach. Its target price is derived from 16.7x 18CL earnings, which is based on 1sd above the 3-year construction sector mean forward PE ratio; this is still below the same ratio for heavyweights Gamuda and IJM, but above its mid-cap peers. We accord premium valuations over mean in our calculations to reflects its robust ROEs of more than 20%, strong cashflow generation backed by steady job orders from both internal and external sources. We further note that in our valuations, we have not incorporated benefit from its consistent net cash position.

Investment risks

The investment risks for SunCon mainly stem from construction risk. Specific risk to our estimates would be lower-than-expected margins (below 5-8%) or amount of projects secured falls below our expectation, either due to inability to secure projects or caused by delay on project roll-out. The increase in steel prices beyond anticipated will also creep into margins as SunCon hedges steel needs for a future six-month period. On the pre-cast segment, risks to our earnings will be erosion of its currently-strong margins of 20% and/or the inability to retain customers due to the shift in its plant location (from Singapore to Malaysia) causing a slowdown in orders. SunCon is also susceptible to risk facing the construction industry in general, which includes the risk of disputes and ensuing lengthy negotiations which is not uncommon, not to mention the fluctuations in raw materials and availability of labour.





Summary financials

Year to 31 December	2015A	2016A	2017CL	2018CL	2019Cl
Summary P&L forecast (RM	m)				
Revenue	1,917	1,789	2,380	3,304	3,488
Op Ebitda	178	188	245	329	349
Op Ebit	136	149	186	263	277
Interest income	8	10	12	12	15
Interest expense	(4)	(6)	(5)	(5)	(5)
Other items	-	0	-	-	-
Profit before tax	141	154	193	270	287
Taxation	(13)	(30)	(39)	(54)	(57)
Minorities/Pref divs	(1)	0	0	0	C
Net profit	127	124	154	216	229
Summary cashflow forecast	(RMm)				
Operating profit	136	149	186	263	277
Operating adjustments	(3)	(22)	0	0	(
Depreciation/amortisation	42	39	59	66	72
Working capital changes	65	(59)	(42)	(6)	(77)
Net interest/taxes/other	(8)	(33)	(39)	(54)	(57
Net operating cashflow	232	75	165	269	215
Capital expenditure	(39)	(19)	(45)	(45)	(45)
Free cashflow	193	56	120	224	170
Acq/inv/disposals	40	13	-	-	
Int, invt & associate div	(57)	89	12	12	15
Net investing cashflow	(56)	83	(33)	(33)	(30)
Increase in loans	2	0	-	-	
Dividends	(70)	(84)	(97)	(110)	(116)
Net equity raised/other	Ó	-	Ó	Ó	Ì
Net financing cashflow	(68)	(84)	(97)	(110)	(116)
Incr/(decr) in net cash	107	74	35	126	69
Exch rate movements	5	2	(5)	(6)	(5)
Opening cash	278	390	465	495	616
Closing cash	390	465	495	615	679
Cumment helence check for	anat (DMm)				
Summary balance sheet fore		166	495	616	670
Cash & equivalents Debtors	390 579	466 732	796	616 1,104	679 1,166
Inventories	17	24	0	0	1,100
Other current assets	230	24	233	233	233
Fixed assets	162	138	125	104	233
Intangible assets	4	6	6	6	6
Other term assets	14	11	11	11	11
Total assets	1,397	1,597	1,665	2,074	2,171
Short-term debt	137	137	137	137	137
Creditors	796	955	977	1,280	1,264
Other current liabs	9	11	577	1,200	1,20-
Long-term debt/CBs	-	-	_	_	
Provisions/other LT liabs	4	1	1	1	-
Minorities/other equity	1	1	1	1	1
Shareholder funds	451	493	550	656	770
Total liabs & equity	1,397	1,597	1,665	2,074	2,172
	1,007	1,007	1,000	2,074	
Ratio analysis					
Revenue growth (% YoY)	1.9	(6.7)	33.1	38.8	5.6
Ebitda growth (% YoY)	10.2	5.7	30.0	34.3	6.1
Ebitda margin (%)	9.3	10.5	10.3	10.0	10.0
Net profit margin (%)	6.6	6.9	6.5	6.5	6.6
Dividend payout (%)	40.6	52.3	62.9	50.8	50.7
Effective tax rate (%)	9.2	19.5	20.0	20.0	20.0
Ebitda/net int exp (x)	-	-	-	-	
Net debt/equity (%)	(56.2)	(66.7)	(65.0)	(72.9)	(70.4
ROE (%)	30.6	26.2	29.5	35.8	32.2
ROIC (%)	59.1	65.5	83.2	113.4	108.9
EVA®/IC (%)	48.2	54.6	72.3	102.5	98.0





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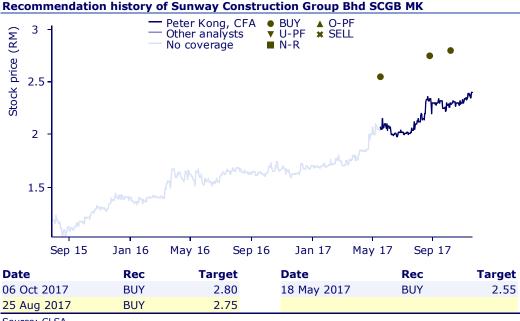
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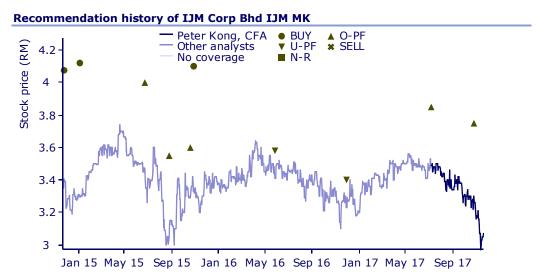
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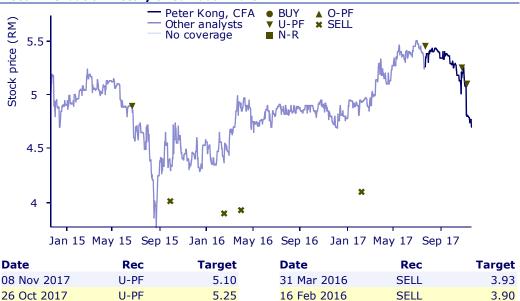
Source: CLSA



Date	Rec	Target	Date	Rec	Target
26 Oct 2017	O-PF	3.75	20 Oct 2015	O-PF	3.60
07 Jul 2017	O-PF	3.85	26 Aug 2015	O-PF	3.55*
29 Nov 2016	U-PF	3.40	24 Jun 2015	O-PF	4.00*
27 May 2016	U-PF	3.58	<mark>06 Jan 2015</mark>	BUY	4.12*
29 Oct 2015	BUY	4.10	26 Nov 2014	BUY	4.08*

Source: CLSA; * Adjusted for corporate action





5.45

4.10

Source	CISA	*	Adjusted	for	corporate	action

U-PF

SELL

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There are no numbers for Hold/Neutral as CLSA/CLST do not have such investment rankings.

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