

CONNECT A30/A35 DBFO ROAD

Introduction

Balfour Beatty has acted as co-promoter /developer of and 100% investor in Connect, the Concessionaire awarded the 30 year Design Build Finance and Operate (DBFO) Contract by the UK Secretary of State for Transport to construct the A30 Honiton to Exeter Improvement Road and the A35 Tolpuddle to Puddletown Bypass and maintain 102 km of single and dual carriageway road from Exeter to Bere Regis along the UK south coast (the Project). The Project reached Financial Close in July 1996.

Project Description

On behalf of Connect, a construction joint venture (CJV), in which Balfour Beatty has a 50% interest, has completed construction of a 22 km dual carriageway improvement between Exeter and Honiton and a 9 km dual carriageway bypass around the villages of Tolpuddle and Puddletown. Connect is maintaining these new sections and, in addition, has, since 1996, been responsible for operating and maintaining some 71 km of the existing road between Exeter and Bere Regis.

Contractual Arrangements

The DBFO Contract between Connect and the Secretary of State is the principal Project Agreement and sets out the obligations of both parties in relation to the Project. These obligations include the operation and maintenance of the Road by Connect for 30 years to certain specified minimum standards, with various penalties if these standards are not maintained.

Under a Construction Contract between Connect and the CJV, the CJV assumed all design and construction related



obligations contained within the DBFO Contract and was responsible for the management and obligations of construction sub-contractors.

Connect is responsible for the major life cycle maintenance of the Project including full replacement of worn out elements. These responsibilities are co-ordinated by an Operations and Maintenance Unit within Connect.

Notable Features

In addition to being one of the first PPP/PFI contracts signed in the UK, the Project also has the distinction of being one of the fastest to Financial Close, taking only 11 weeks from appointment as Preferred Bidder. Connect and its contractor were also responsible for the management of ecological protesters and received positive press coverage for their joint handling of the eviction process.