

Weeford - Fazeley A5 Improvements

Project Particulars

Value: £3M

Duration: 60 weeks

Client: Highways Agency

Engineer: Interserve



Transport Minister, David Jamison cuts the first sod.

This project—which was an ECI—got the green light, the first job involved modification of the illustrative design by the Highways Agency’s agent Owen Williams in order that the project fitted within the £40M budget set by the client.

A reworked target cost of £32M was submitted and final acceptance and notice to proceed on site was given.

The team had gauged the risks and made several design changes, such as fine-tuning the vertical alignment in order to achieve a cut and fill balance for the earthworks.

Allowances were made in the development of costs at stage one with a risk register to limit the total cost. There was need for archaeological study, and landowners were very supportive in providing access for the works.

A slightly more troublesome part of the works for the team was Hints Hill. Geological knowledge was limited to an expectation of random

conglomerates which would change, across a faultline into mudstone; occurrence of hidden crown holes was a possibility also. It was without full survey data that these risks were considered; a fact all parties were aware of, but excavation needed to commence. Crown holes, were not a problem; but there were some fissures which required grouting with geotextile bridging.

The conglomerate was tricky to remove; conventional digging was not working, and ripping with a D8 resulted in broken plant attachments. In the end Greyhound used a 75t quarrying excavator and 40t excavators with rock picks to break up the rock.

The area was home to a working quarry and the contract included the reinstatement of a section of the workings, now exhausted. These workings had differed from the

outline shown in planning documents. It has been learned from this contract that there are real benefits to having a full ECI arrangement.

Greyhound had 1M m³ of muck to shift, including: cutting through Hints Hill; 150,000 m³ of cut to grade-separate the A5/A38 junction at the Weeford end of the works; and filling inbetween to flatten the new road alignment. The project was completed in 2005, resulting in a 5km dual carriageway, bypassing Hints and a key connection between the A38, the A5 and the new M6 toll road. The road was officially opened by the Minister of State for Transport, Dr. Stephen Ladyman, on October 12, 2005.



A38 tie in to Hints Hill



The finished bypass