



cabe
press release

Subject

Date

26 October 2004

Driving success: First highways scheme wins Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award

Strictly embargoed until 00:01 Friday 29 October 2004

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The A650 Bingley Relief Road, which has cut traffic congestion in the town by more than half, has won this year's Prime Minister's Better Public Building Awards - the first time a highways scheme has scooped the design excellence award.

The Yorkshire road scheme beat 16 other schemes on the shortlist at an evening awards ceremony on 28 October¹. The 4.5km road included the construction of 26 structures, including a multi-million pound bridge spanning the River Aire and a low-level bridge crossing Bingley South Bog, along a route through the town centre, between numerous man made and natural obstacles and was still completed three months ahead of schedule.

Now in their fourth year, the awards recognise excellence in design quality and procurement practices of publicly funded building schemes and this year saw a record 137 entries.

The Judges said: 'The A650 Bingley Relief Road had some tricky site conditions to negotiate and a history of local opposition. But aside from the technical skills displayed, it shows

¹ The Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer, presented the BCIA ceremony at Grosvenor House Hotel, London on Thursday 28 October in front of 900 industry leaders.

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what an excellent job was done in terms of public consultation – with exhibitions, neighbourhood forums and a project website all playing their part.'

In addition to the construction of 26 structures, the road also had to go through Bingley town centre, between an electrified railway and a canal, traversing three peat bogs and with a major cutting through a contaminated landfill site. Environmental measures included retaining 250,000m³ of contaminated waste on site and reclamation of the entire area of the former landfill. The construction team engaged with the community, especially in school liaison, and the traffic levels in Bingley have been significantly reduced.

Paul Finch, Interim Chairman of CABA and a judge of the awards, said: 'This year has seen a record number of entries, both large and small scale, and 17 projects were shortlisted, all of which were of a high quality. This is the first time that a civil engineering project, in this case a road scheme, has won the award, which we are delighted about. Good road schemes make an immense difference to the quality of life for motorists and town residents. The excellent design, construction approach and overall delivery of the Bingley Road cannot be underestimated.'

Paul Watters, Head of Road Policy at the AA Motoring Trust, said: 'The A650 Bingley Relief Road shows that there are still road schemes around that gain public support because they remove the blight of traffic and let communities get on with their lives. CABA's award is a welcome first as it will re-energise people to press for high quality road

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solutions in places where roads have clearly not kept pace with growing traffic - this was certainly the case at Bingley where for 20 years a main road came to a halt near a town centre.'

John Oughton, Chief Executive of OGC, said: 'I am delighted with this award. The project has made a real difference to Bingley. This road scheme was completed ahead of time and shows how a complex set of obstacles can be overcome with imagination and skill. It is an excellent illustration to show that the Government's Achieving Excellence in Construction principles work and meet the user's needs.'

The award is jointly sponsored by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Office of Government Commerce (OGC). It is part of the British Construction Industry Awards (BCIA).



Photo: A650 Bingley Relief Road. Call CABE Press Office for a high-resolution version on 020 7960 2421.

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Note for editors:

- Press contact for the Highways Agency is Sheila Perry, GNN Yorkshire and the Humber. Call 0113 283 6596 or email Sheila.perry@gnn.gsi.gov.uk
- The main contractors were Amec Capital Projects Ltd
- **Images** of the shortlisted projects are available from the CABE Press Office, contact Katherine Heaton on 020 7960 2421
- The complete short list was:
 - Architecture Building, Lincoln University
 - Wolfson Medical School for the University of Glasgow
 - City & Islington College Life Long Learning Centre
 - Raines Court, London, N16
 - A1 Haddington to Dunbar Expressway, East Lothian
 - Masshouse Circus Redevelopment, Birmingham
 - A650 Bingley Relief Road, Yorks
 - World Squares for All - Phase 1: Trafalgar Square & Environs
 - New Accommodation Project, GCHQ, Cheltenham
 - Hoyle Early Years Centre, Bury
 - Brookley Road Public Conveniences, Brockenhurst, Hants
 - Wildern Basic Needs Secondary School, Southampton
 - Past Masters: Three Aqueducts, Wootton Wawen, Warwicks
 - UB 289 Moy Viaduct, Inverness
 - Whittle Arch and Glass Bridge, Coventry
 - A6116 Rockingham Road, Corby

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- Newton's Cove Coast Protection Scheme, Weymouth
- Further information on each of the 17 short listed schemes can also be found at www.betterpublicbuildings.gov.uk
- The Award is made annually to new projects commissioned by central or local government and paid mainly with public funds. It is part of the Better Public Building Initiative launched by the Prime Minister in October 2000 to encourage the adoption of quality design principles in all new public sector buildings, regardless of size and cost
- CABA champions the creation of great buildings and public spaces. It is a non-departmental public body set up by the Government in 1999. Through public campaigns and support to professionals, CABA encourages the development of well-designed homes, streets, parks, offices, schools, hospitals and other public buildings - www.cabe.org.uk
- The Office of Government Commerce (OGC) is an office of HM Treasury that works with central civil Government as a catalyst to achieve best value for money in commercial activities. The OGC, working with departments and the wider public sector, will play a key role in delivering efficiency improvements.
- A press release for the BCI Awards, detailing all the 2004 categories and awards is available from David Helsen, Awards Co-ordinator on 020 8786 6699 or email consult@helsen.com