INNOVATION MANAGEMENT ON PROJECT ALLIANCES: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates innovation in project alliances with particular reference to the Wivenhoe Alliance. It first examines the process of innovation by introducing a theoretical model before looking at the concept of project alliances in general and the necessary environment needed for innovation to thrive within this specific context. The paper goes on to analyse in depth the particular situation of the Wivenhoe Alliance and to describe how innovation has been promoted within its organisation, drawing conclusions and making recommendations of general interest for the industry.

Keywords: alliance, construction, innovation,

INTRODUCTION

Innovation is described by Higgins (1995) as ‘the process of creating something new that has significant value to an individual, a group, an organisation, an industry, or a society’. Innovation can take the form of a new idea or a new application of an old idea as long as it brings value.

According to Sherwood (2001) innovation is a process with 4 distinct steps (Figure 1):
1. Idea generation – having the ideas in the first place
2. Evaluation – deciding which ideas are suitable for further investigation
3. Development – refining the original idea from initial concept to working reality
4. Implementation – using the innovation for the benefit of the organisation