

Irish Firm to Purchase Tilcon, Reports Say

September 04, 1996|By WILLIAM HATHAWAY; Courant Staff Writer

Tilcon Inc., of New Britain, one of the largest providers of road **construction** materials in Connecticut and the Northeast, will be sold by its British owners to an Irish construction conglomerate, according to state officials and published reports. As a provision of the deal, a subsidiary of CRH Group Plc., of Dublin, Tuesday agreed to **sell** two asphalt plants and a rock quarry in East Granby that it plans to acquire from Tilcon in order to avoid antitrust violations in the Hartford area, Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said.

FOR THE RECORD - Correction ran September 6, 1996 on Page A2.

* The George A. Tomasso Construction Corp. is working on the reconstruction of the Founders Bridge in Hartford. The status of the company's work on the project was incorrectly reported in a story on Page F1 Wednesday.

Oldcastle Northeast Inc., of Washington, the CRH subsidiary that plans to buy Tilcon, also owns Balf Co. Together, Balf and Oldcastle would have had a stranglehold on the asphalt market in north-central Connecticut, Blumenthal said.

``With this agreement, we will continue to have two suppliers," Blumenthal said.

The agreement between Oldcastle, the state and officials of the U.S. **Justice** Department still needs to be reviewed by the Justice Department, and requires approval by U.S. District Court in Hartford. Tilcon officials would not comment on a sales report or an agreement.

However, The London Evening Standard reported that CRH will pay \$279 million to BTR Plc., the London-based owner of Tilcon. The Standard said the deal will be finalized next month.

CRH also confirmed that it was interested in acquiring more U.S. companies, according to a report by Bloomberg Business News.

CRH is a global manufacturer of **construction** materials, and it reported profits of more than \$77 million in 1995. The Tilcon companies are run by Angelo Tomasso Jr., one of the leading figures in the Connecticut **construction** industry for decades, and a well-known philanthropist.

The Tomasso family began its construction company in 1923 and sold it in 1972.

Tilcon had no ties to a **company** owned by Angelo Tomasso's brother, the George A. Tomasso Construction Corp., which last year failed to complete the \$68 million reconstruction of Founders Bridge in Hartford because of a lack of funds.