



# Sustainable Growth and Prosperity

Priorities for the next UK Government

#GrowthProsperity

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From low-carbon transport, sustainable and vibrant communities, climate change mitigation, or competitive yet agile procurement – the built environment is well positioned to provide solutions to the diverse challenges faced by society.

Today's challenges demand a multifaceted approach that engages experts and stakeholders across sectors. Whether we're upgrading existing infrastructure, fostering effective placemaking, delivering integrated transport, practicing value-based procurement, shaping the future of industry skills, or working towards a low-carbon future.

## **However, to unlock these solutions, a strong and effective partnership between industry and government is required:**

There needs to be greater **cross-party consensus**: establishing a partnership which is cohesive, attractive to industry, and long-term. That partnership must go beyond political boundaries and ensure a unified approach to the development and implementation of infrastructure projects.

For long-term stability, it is crucial to communicate to the public a steadfast and consistent vision for the nation's infrastructure landscape. This means a robust **pipeline for delivery**, including timelines, milestones, measurable social value outcomes, and an open conversation about cost.

The partnership must galvanise a competitive industry by providing the right policy and regulatory tools. By **streamlining decision-making processes**, we can deliver swift and informed action. This agility is the central to unlocking industry potential, allowing it to drive sustainable solutions.

These commitments extend beyond national borders, recognising that we are in a global race for innovation and competitiveness. As other nations rapidly advance in upgrading their infrastructure, fostering effective placemaking, and pioneering integrated transport, the risk of the UK falling behind looms large.

Our priorities are a crucial blueprint for ensuring that the UK not only keeps pace but emerges as a global leader in addressing these challenges.

The UK consultancy and engineering sector contributes:



More than 70,000  
companies in operation



A market size  
of over £62bn



Over 420,000  
people employed



# Priorities for the next government:



## 1. A NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY



Provide a deliverable roadmap for the built environment and consultants up to 2050. Outlining a comprehensive and **compelling procurement strategy** which opens new opportunities for SMEs and Large Consultants to solve the UK's biggest challenges including low-carbon transport, sustainable and vibrant communities, and climate change resilience and mitigation.



Incorporate and implement the main insights and recommendations in the **National Infrastructure Commission's latest assessment**. This integration is essential for aligning the strategy with expert assessments and industry needs, ensuring it delivers across different sectors of the economy.



Unify **government initiatives** across various sectors of the economy, including transport, procurement, climate change, places, and skills. By aligning and bringing together these initiatives, the strategy can become a cohesive plan focused on efficient project delivery right across the UK.

## 2. A NEW DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE



Facilitate faster and more effective decision-making across the built environment, serving as a hub for strategic planning and policy implementation. It will foster **efficiency and accountability**, working with bodies including the Infrastructure Projects Authority, the Infrastructure Bank, and the Infrastructure Commission.



Develop and be responsible for the delivery of a National infrastructure and Industrial Strategy, collaboration with industry and other government departments to **streamline decision-making**. This will be crucial for ensuring a coherent and unified approach to the delivery and ongoing maintenance of the UK's Infrastructure Strategy.



Play a pivotal role in risk management and mitigation strategies, with **capacity** to assess and address potential risks in infrastructure projects, while also leveraging technological advancements for the integration of cutting-edge technologies, enhancing decision-making processes, project monitoring, and overall efficiency.

### 3. FAIR AND PROPORTIONATE APPROACH TO RISK



Clearly define and limit liabilities, ensuring industry can operate within a more **predictable risk environment**. This clarity empowers informed decisions, confidently pursuing projects, and allocating resources efficiently, fostering a conducive atmosphere for innovation and excellence in infrastructure delivery.



Addressing challenges with **joint and several liability**, reflecting examples of best practice internationally. This could be achieved through legislation to discourage joint and several liability or changes around net contribution clauses.



Drive greater confidence in the market by ensuring all government and local authorities lead by example. This includes using contracts and appointments that contain **fair terms** and impose duties and obligations upon contracting parties that are equitable and insurable, particularly around PII levels of cover.

This document sets out our members' priorities for working in partnership with government to deliver a competitive regulatory and policy framework to unlock the vast opportunities for the UK to be a leader in the delivery of a safe, innovative, resilient, and globally competitive built environment sector, driving economic growth by delivering well-connected, socially valuable, and environmentally sustainable places.

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 Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE)

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The Association for Consultancy and Engineering is the association for the UK's professional consultancies and engineering companies operating in the social and economic infrastructure sectors.