

# New framework to ensure road and rail development projects protect the environment

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An updated framework with measures to protect the environment in new major road, rail, and rail freight schemes has been unveiled by the government.

The framework has been updated to reflect legislation set out in the Environment Act, which requires developers to recognise new environmental targets and sets out further details on biodiversity net gains. The new framework also recognises the proposed environmental outcome reports, allowing the government to set clear and tangible environmental outcomes against which transport schemes are assessed.

A [consultation has been launched on an updated national networks national policy statement \(NNNPS\)](#) with measures to require developers of new road, rail and rail freight schemes to show how they meet environmental targets, consider biodiversity net gains and the impact of their proposals on carbon emissions.

Roads and rail are a critical part of the transport network in facilitating connectivity and boosting economic links. The Government is committed to continuing to develop these networks, while protecting the environment, strengthening connectivity and growing the economy.

The consultation is seeking views on an updated framework used by developers and the Government when developing major road, rail and freight schemes.

Transport Minister Richard Holden said: “Transport has a vital role to play in levelling up our country, connecting people with good jobs and education opportunities across our cities, town and villages and in growing the economy.

“This new framework is part of our mission to build a more sustainable transport system which protects our wonderful English countryside and wildlife while delivering opportunity by levelling up our transport network across the country.”

The updated framework supports **plans** recently set out by the government to ensure the planning system can speed up the delivery of major infrastructure by making the system greener, faster and more resilient.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks until 6 June 2023.

The **government has also announced that the framework used to assess major port development proposals is being reviewed** to ensure that it reflects the issues facing ports today.

The **national policy statement for ports** (NPSP) was designated in 2012, and will now be reviewed by the Transport Secretary in light of more recent trends in port freight traffic, and a range of institutional changes and evolution of wider policy, notably in the environmental sphere.

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