

Written Ministerial Statement

National Infrastructure Plan

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Danny Alexander): The government's commitment to infrastructure is a crucial part of our long-term economic plan. High quality infrastructure boosts productivity and competitiveness, and can unlock economic potential across the UK.

The National Infrastructure Plan 2014 sets out an ambitious infrastructure vision for the next parliament and beyond, reinforcing the government's commitment to investing in infrastructure and improving its quality and performance. It also summarises the substantial progress that has been made during this parliament, including the completion of over 2500 different infrastructure projects or schemes.

The National Infrastructure Plan is underpinned by the infrastructure pipeline, which is a forward-looking, bottom-up assessment of planned public and private infrastructure investment in the UK. The refreshed infrastructure pipeline sets out over £460 billion of planned public and private investment to the end of the decade and beyond across the key infrastructure sectors.

The new announcements contained in the National Infrastructure Plan are as follows:

Flood defences

The government has published its 6-year programme of investment in flood defences, allocating the £2.3bn capital funding provided at the 2013 Spending Round

Interconnectors

The government will ensure that interconnectors can participate in the 2015 capacity auction, estimating the eligible capacity of each interconnector on a case-by-case basis

Swansea Tidal Lagoon

The government will start closer discussions with Tidal Lagoon (Swansea Bay) plc to establish whether a tidal lagoon at Swansea Bay is affordable and value for money for consumers.

UK Guarantee scheme: Moorside

HM Treasury has reached a cooperation agreement with Toshiba, GDF Suez and NuGen with the aim of issuing a statement of intent to provide a guarantee to assist the financing of a new nuclear power plant at Moorside, subject to due diligence and ministerial approval.

Broadband connection vouchers

Connection vouchers - the government will provide up to £40m to extend the SME connection voucher scheme to March 2016 and to more cities. Vouchers will be available on a first come, first served basis.

700MHz spectrum change of use

Further details of the clearance process for high-value spectrum will be set out in 2015 ahead of a further auction of mobile broadband spectrum, subject to the development of delivery options by DCMS and Ofcom.

Northstowe

The government will take forward development at Northstowe, to support accelerated delivery of up to 10,000 homes, and evaluate the feasibility and economic impact of using this model at a wider scale to support and accelerate housing supply

Barking Riverside

The government will agree a principal heads of terms agreement for a loan of £55 million to support the extension of the Gospel Oak to Barking Line to Barking Riverside, to unlock the delivery of up to 11,000 new homes.

Brent Cross

The government supports the London Borough of Barnet and GLA plans for the regeneration of Brent Cross which could deliver 7,500 homes, subject to a full business case.

Ebbsfleet

The government is making the first £100m available to fund infrastructure and land remediation at Ebbsfleet, taking forward its commitment to build the first new garden city for almost 100 years, which will deliver up to 15,000 new homes. Improvements to the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junctions will be delivered as part of the Highways Agency programme. The government will also undertake a review of transport provision for the Ebbsfleet area, including Crossrail, High Speed 1, Southern and Southeastern rail services.

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park redevelopment (Olympicopolis)

The government will invest £141m to support the London Legacy Development Corporation and Mayor of London's plans to build a new higher education and cultural quarter at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Roads Investment Strategy

The government is committing £15 billion between 2015-16 and 2020-21 to continue the transformation of the Strategic Road Network, including major projects for the A303, A1, A47 and A27.

Crossrail 2

The government will provide £2 million between 2014-15 and 2015-16 to support the development of a comprehensive business case produced jointly by the Department for Transport and Transport for London, to complete ahead of the next Spending Review. This will be combined with a full options appraisal of all potential major transport projects in London, including an extension of the Bakerloo Line to improve connectivity in south east London, and the devolution of South Eastern rail services to London.

Ultra-low emission vehicle research and development

The government is announcing up to £50 million between 2017-18 and 2019-20, to support innovation in manufacturing of ultra-low emission vehicles in the UK, based on a government contribution of £25 million for which it will seek match-funding from industry.

Support for ultra-low emission vehicles

The Roads Investment Strategy sets aside £15 million between 2015-16 and 2020-21 for a national network of chargepoints for ultra-low emission vehicles on the Strategic Road Network. The government is also announcing further detail of three funds totalling £85 million to support ultra-low emission taxis, buses and cities.

The government will provide an additional £10 million between 2017-18 and 2019-20 to increase ultra-low emission vehicles in London, in support of the ambition to introduce an Ultra-Low Emission Zone by 2025.

Local highways maintenance grant

The government has already announced that local highways maintenance funding will be increased, totalling £5.8 billion over the next six years, and can now announce how the formula grant will be broken down by region

Clean Vehicle Technology fund

The government will provide up to £4 million to extend the Clean Vehicle Technology fund in 2014-15 which funds road vehicle modification by Local Authorities in order to reduce air pollution.

Chesterton Rail Station

As announced by the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister the government will provide £44 million between 2014-15 and 2016-17 to build a new rail station at Chesterton, linked to Cambridge Science Park.

Cycle City Ambition grants

As announced by the Deputy Prime Minister on 27 November, the government will provide £114 million between 2015-16 and 2017-18 to enable the continuation of the Cycle City Ambition scheme in the eight cities it already covers. This will provide capital funding for better cycle infrastructure such as segregated lanes and improved junctions.

Access for all

The government will increase the funding for the Access for All scheme by £60 million between 2015-16 and 2018-19, improving platform access at around 20 stations.

Norwich in Ninety

The government supports the key recommendations of the Great Eastern Main Line Task Force, including upgraded infrastructure and the latest Rolling Stock. Bidders for the next Anglia Franchise, which will start in Oct 2016, will be incentivised to submit plans for achieving these recommendations for services to Norwich in 90 minutes and associated benefits along the Great Eastern Mainline.

East West Rail

The government will consider the outputs of the Network Rail study into the East West Rail central section (Bedford to Cambridge) as part of the planning for Control Period 6 (2019-2024).

Dawlish rail services

The government will support Network Rail in its work to improve the resilience of the railway at Dawlish. Additionally, it will ask Network Rail to examine wider issues surrounding connectivity to and within the South West peninsula. Specifically, Network Rail will consider alternatives to the current mainline route to the South West via Dawlish, including an alternative route via the north side of Dartmoor through Okehampton. This work will feed into Network Rail's Initial Industry Plan for Control Period 6 (2019-2024).

Bath City Centre Congestion Relief

The Government welcomes the strategy put forward by Bath and North East Somerset Council and the West of England LEP to improve transport capacity East of Bath and reduce city centre congestion. The government will consider a business case, which will be developed by Bath and North East Somerset Council that assesses the viability of proposals including a park and ride, as well as a park and rail service, located to the East of Bath.

National Transport Policy

The government plans to lay the National Networks National Policy Statement before Parliament this month for consideration and a formal vote

Planning:

The government will publish proposals for Compulsory Purchase Reforms for consultation at Budget 2015 to make processes clearer, faster and fairer, with the aim of bringing forward more brownfield land for development

The government will take forward measures to ensure that the principle of development need only be established once.

The government will take steps to speed up section 106 negotiations, to reduce delays to the planning process.

The government will keep speed of major decisions under review, with minimum performance thresholds increasing to 50% of major decisions made on time as performance improves.

The Government is also announcing today a number of additional housing and planning measures:

Bicester

The government will support a new garden town at Bicester to provide up to 13,000 new homes subject to value for money.

Public sector land: housing delivery

The government will set ambitious targets for the release of public sector land between 2015 and 2020. Government is committed to releasing land with capacity for up to 150,000 homes.

Affordable housing

The government will extend affordable housing capital investment to 2018-19 and 2019-20, to ensure that 275,000 new affordable homes can be delivered over the next Parliament.

Shared ownership

The government will work with housing associations, lenders and the regulator to identify and lift barriers to extending shared ownership, including a consultation on options for streamlining the process for selling on shared ownership properties.

Housing Associations

The government will consult on ways to increase the borrowing capacity of housing associations in relation to the valuation of properties transferred from local authorities.

Estates Regeneration

Budget 14 announced a £150 million fund to kick start the regeneration of social housing estates through repayable loans. Following a bidding round, Grahame Park, Blackwall Reach, Aylesbury Estate and New Union Wharf regeneration projects have all now been approved for funding, subject to due diligence and contract negotiations.

Planning: small applications

The government will publish new data on Local Authorities' performance in meeting their statutory duty to process smaller planning applications within 8 weeks.

Planning: small sites

The government will work with industry and Local Authorities to test whether more can be done to support the approval of small sites in the planning system.

Copies of the National Infrastructure Plan 2014 will be available on the gov.uk website and have been deposited in the libraries of both Houses.

HM Treasury
2 December 2014