

Government Unveils Plans to Streamline Planning for Major Infrastructure Projects

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The UK government has unveiled plans to overhaul the planning system for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) across England, aiming to streamline the approval process for critical infrastructure projects.

The proposed reforms, outlined in a new working paper published today, seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system for projects crucial to the nation's economic growth and development, including electricity networks, clean energy sources, roads, public transport, and water supplies.

The government recognizes the critical importance of upgrading the country's major economic infrastructure to ensure the delivery of essential services. The working paper emphasizes the need to streamline the development process while ensuring that local communities and environmental concerns are adequately considered.

The proposals focus on potential legislative changes to the Planning Act 2008, with a particular emphasis on five key areas for reform within the NSIP process. One key proposal involves introducing a procedure for making "reflective amendments" to National Policy Statements. These amendments would ensure that the NPS remains up-to-date and aligned with the latest legislative changes, government policies, and relevant court decisions.

The government is now seeking feedback from stakeholders, including communities, infrastructure developers, clean power providers, and local authorities, on these proposed reforms.