

# London Infrastructure Framework

**building London's sustainable, inclusive future**  
**executive summary**

**LONDON  
COUNCILS**

The logo for London Councils, featuring the text "LONDON COUNCILS" in a bold, sans-serif font. A thick, black, curved line sweeps under the text from the right side, ending under the word "COUNCILS".

# Executive summary

London's infrastructure framework is designed to identify and advance projects and programmes that support London's economic framework, which sets out a vision for an inclusive and sustainable future. It aims to unlock short-term opportunities to drive regeneration, whilst also laying the groundwork for a more long-term approach which builds capacity to deliver infrastructure that supports inclusive economic growth across the capital. The framework embeds sustainability as a core aim, looking to highlight and encourage interventions that contribute to London's climate resilience and decarbonisation.

Infrastructure is central to London's ambition to develop a more inclusive and sustainable future by providing for today's residents and businesses and unlocking future development opportunities. Bringing together the major projects that can support both London and the UK to achieve clean and inclusive growth is an important step, as is building the local capacity needed to advance strategic infrastructure design and delivery.

London boroughs have come together to create this framework for mapping and prioritising infrastructure across London; the framework has also been informed by discussions with the Greater London Authority and Transport for London, and is broadly aligned with their strategies, though its primary aim is to reflect and capture the views of London Councils and boroughs. This means that partners across the capital can speak with a more united voice to investors and to Government about regional priorities, specific opportunities, and how development will empower London's long-term economic vision. Both London Councils and the GLA have expressed the intention to undertake the next major review of the framework jointly, which would strengthen the capital's voice even further.



Claremont Park, at Brent Cross Town, one of the largest urban regeneration projects in Europe. The design of Claremont Park has been guided by a set of principles that include: encouraging social spaces, improving connectivity, being accessible and inclusive, and creating real opportunities for play, leisure, exercise, and sport.

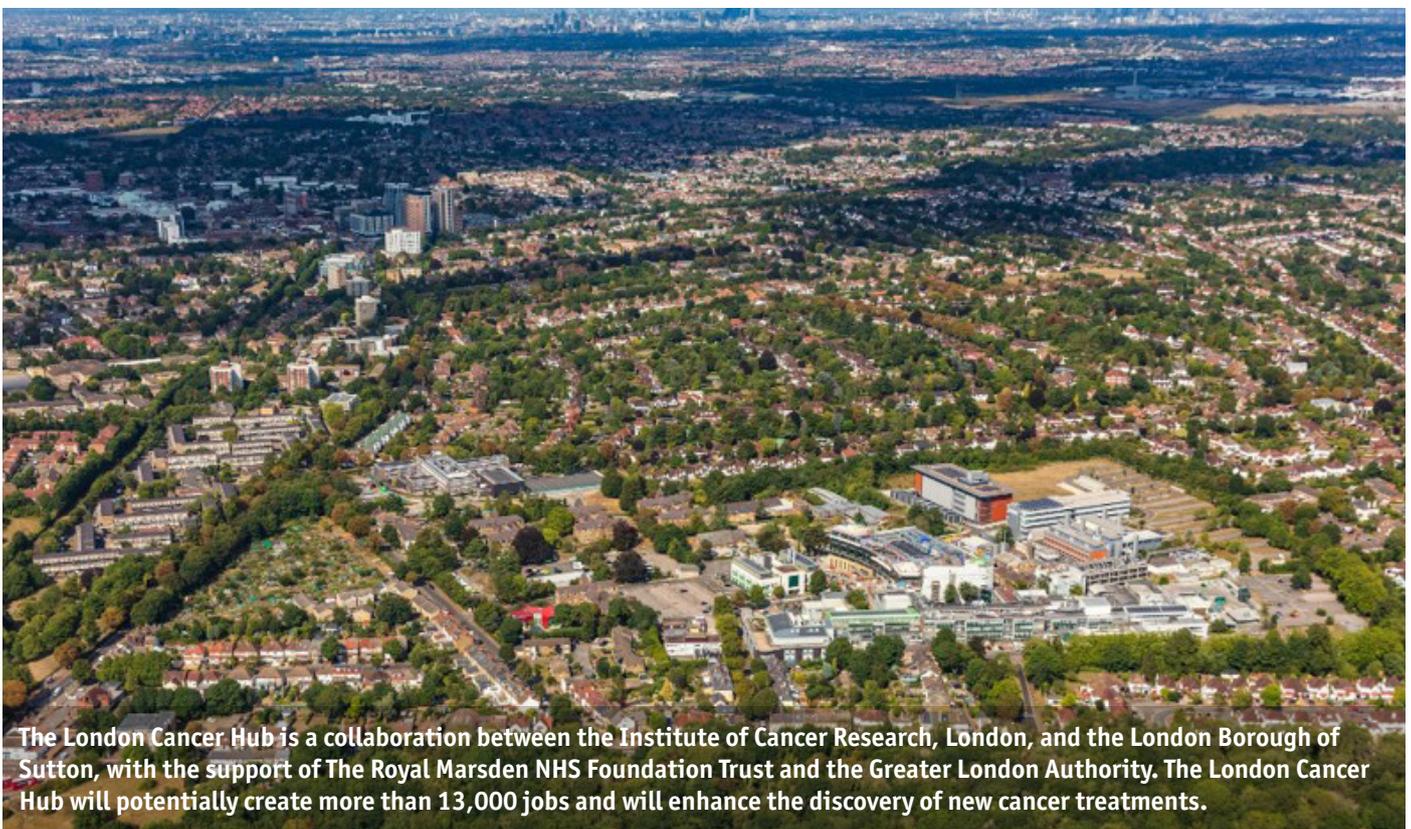
# Drivers of strategic infrastructure

The framework reflects the six infrastructure categories covered by the National Infrastructure Commission: transport, energy, waste, water and wastewater, flood risk management, and digital communications. It summarises key trends impacting infrastructure provision and demand across London and within its Sub-Regional Partnerships: a shifting economic geography, inequality and the need for inclusive growth as the city develops further, mitigating the impacts of climate change, and proactively facilitating the Net Zero transition by managing local energy supply and demand.

London's existing transport infrastructure is world class, and a major asset in decarbonising the city, but it needs maintenance and investment. Infrastructure interventions in general are provided by local, regional, and national organisations, and infrastructure is owned and managed by a range of public and private organisations. This complexity causes fragmentation, particularly considering the range of types of

interventions needed to maintain, adapt, and provide new infrastructure. Moreover, London needs major new infrastructure investment to support the emergence of a more polycentric model of economic growth, to connect disadvantaged communities to economic opportunities, and to empower the Net Zero transition.

Strategic infrastructure investment is also needed to unlock the economic, social, and environmental potential of regeneration projects, innovation clusters, and opportunity areas across the capital. These create local benefits in the form of high quality homes and jobs, and also help the UK economy grow faster at a time when this is a national imperative.



**The London Cancer Hub is a collaboration between the Institute of Cancer Research, London, and the London Borough of Sutton, with the support of The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust and the Greater London Authority. The London Cancer Hub will potentially create more than 13,000 jobs and will enhance the discovery of new cancer treatments.**

# The case for strategic infrastructure

Infrastructure investment in London can kickstart national growth and accelerate the Net Zero transition. It is critical to productivity growth, the challenge that sits at the heart of Britain's growth problem. London itself has seen a marked slowdown in productivity growth since the financial crash, compounded by the initial effects of Brexit and the rapid acceleration of long-term trends in the decline of retail and office working that were brought about by Covid lockdowns. London must also address its notable social and spatial inequalities, as well as mitigate the consequences of extreme temperatures and weather events as a result of climate change. It must maintain its status as a competitive, global city.

London developed a new economic framework in light of these challenges, and identified the role for infrastructure investment in supporting inclusive and sustainable renewal. This requires new ways of working for a city that until recently has seen steady growth for the last three decades. London must also play its part in supporting Levelling Up, whilst recognising that this national priority has real effects for investment available in the capital.

The case is clear for investing in infrastructure in London in order to boost regional and national economic growth, but the funding for this will need to be driven locally and regionally rather than nationally. To make this possible, London will need to have greater flexibility and control over the proceeds of future growth in order to bolster its ability to promote inclusive and sustainable growth without overreliance on the national exchequer. This will also require the London system to work together to a greater degree, as it has already begun to in responding to Covid-19 and in developing the [London Economic Framework](#).

Taking into account assessment of infrastructure needs and London's economic ambition, the framework sets out six strategic priorities for infrastructure:

## **Reaching Net Zero**

Embedding sustainability, decarbonisation and climate resilience

## **Future facing**

Balancing the need to keep pace with demands and requirements, with broader structural changes needed

## **Housing & Development**

Unlocking employment space, social infrastructure or housing: enabling use of planning consents

## **London-wide impact**

Potential for multi-borough social and economic impact, often as well as multi-borough scale

## **Considering geography**

Enhancing the relationship between infrastructure and strategic spatial planning across Greater London

## **Deliverable & Investable**

Sufficiently developed as to indicate deliverability, even if funding needs are outstanding

# The infrastructure framework

The infrastructure framework itself for the first time brings together and maps infrastructure projects and programmes from boroughs across the capital and assesses them based on the strategic criteria set out below:

## **Pan London Exemplars**

Projects with London-wide significance, typically with both geographic scale and significant potential economic & social impact performing across multiple strategic criteria

## **Sub Regional Exemplars**

Projects with noteworthy strategic impact and scale, but typically not so extensive as to expand over more than five boroughs

## **Growth Catalysts**

Projects with typically smaller scale, but significant potential to unlock more immediate growth opportunities through planned housing, employment space or social infrastructure

## **Strategic pilots**

Relatively small scale projects which are pioneering new approaches or employing new technologies to deliver infrastructure and promote sustainability

In all, 180 projects were collated and reviewed, with 67 identified as relevant to the framework at present. These were further categorised across the four groups set out here in order to articulate their scale and their relationship to the strategic priorities.

This is a point-in-time reflection and, critically, there both are and will be more projects involved in delivering on the vision of London's inclusive and sustainable future. There are important geographical gaps in strategic activity, and at present projects related to decarbonisation, local energy generation, and flood risk do not reflect the significant pressures faced across the capital and its ambitious targets around climate change. The framework will be maintained and updated by London Councils to include new projects and reflect changes to their stages of development.

The structure and the specific projects identified in the framework amount to a meaningful resource to be used by London Councils, by Sub-Regional Partnerships, and by boroughs in engagement with government and with investors. Each category of projects can be deployed both strategically and tactically, for instance in discussion and negotiation with prospective partners at investor and policy events.



# Delivering infrastructure for the future

Meeting London's future challenges and opportunities will require cutting-edge and adaptable infrastructure solutions. Existing infrastructure must be upgraded to improve energy efficiency, increase resilience to sudden shocks and long-term stresses, and reduce emissions. New infrastructure must balance deliverability and accessibility with ambition and growth; delivery models must keep pace with opportunities to advance strategic priorities.

Novel and innovative funding and delivery mechanisms will be required to meet London's future infrastructure needs. The infrastructure framework does not present a formal funding strategy because the types of projects included are too varied and complex for a single approach to funding. Instead, it outlines a range of funding and finance options that could unlock private investment and improve London's self-sufficiency.

London already has examples of innovative working to deliver infrastructure requirements. 3Ci is building a national business case for a neighbourhood model of delivering housing retrofit requirements, and the Mayor of London has established a green bond to raise £500m of capital to invest in decarbonisation and other climate related projects in London<sup>1</sup>.

The development of the framework also involved a roundtable with investors and discussions with the BusinessLDN working group on private investment in infrastructure. It is clear that whilst there is strong interest in a range of infrastructure investment opportunities across London, many opportunities need public sector leadership and de-risking in order to be viable. That requires more investable projects, more appetite for risk, and more collaboration to create projects and capacity at the right scale. Fundamentally, it also requires greater fiscal devolution to London, in order to broker investment based on longer-term funding certainty and the ability to deploy funding streams linked to future growth.

Not only does London have less fiscal flexibility and autonomy than its global competitors, but it is also being left behind in the devolution process compared with other UK city-regions. The Trailblazer Devolution Deals for Greater Manchester and the West Midlands and the progress of devolution to the other Mayoral Combined Authorities are welcome developments as the next phase in fiscal devolution to places; but whilst London was the starting point for this process two decades ago, TfL now has far less funding certainty than other city-region

transport bodies, and London leaders have fewer levers, and less fiscal flexibility, than other civic leaders across the country.

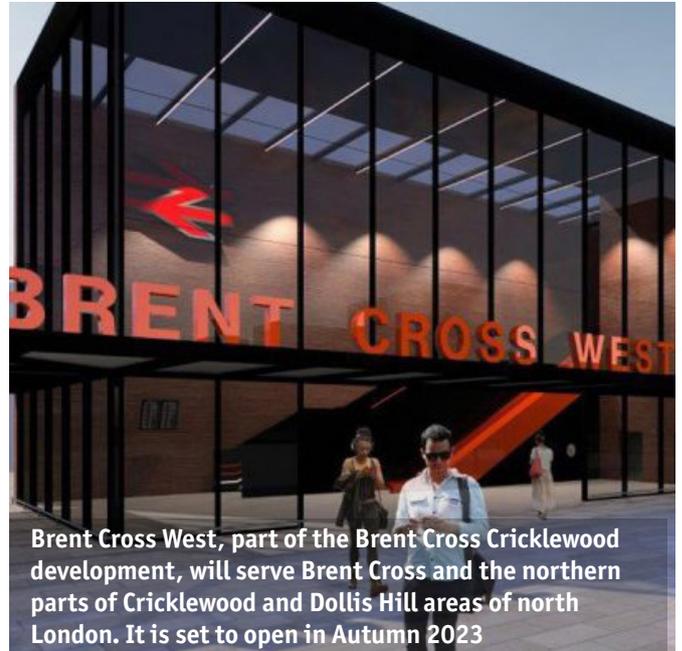
To develop and deliver on a new deal for London, and to activate transformational infrastructure investment, will mean building on the collaboration that has been established in recent years across London boroughs and with the GLA, based on guiding principles set out in the framework.

- **A consensus-led approach should enable solutions & interventions that benefit all of London**, even if not necessarily at the same points in time
- **Pan-London collaboration** should support parts of London with less capacity to meet the long-term vision of a thriving and poly-centric economic geography
- **Shared governance** and accountability across London, evolving economic governance so that it continues to lead and co-ordinate impactful investment
- **London should become increasingly self-sufficient** with skills and flexibilities to progress strategic priorities even in a constrained public funding environment
- **Fit for purpose solutions should be developed and applied to strategic infrastructure interventions** from a practical toolkit of potential supports
- **Risks should be shared across a number of partners**, and borne by the institutions best set up to manage it, rather than a single authority or partner
- **Long term strategic public-private partnerships should create opportunities** to optimise socio-economic and environmental outcomes over time

1. The 3Ci initiative, co-founded by London Councils alongside Core Cities UK and Connected Places Catapult, exists to find investable solutions for achieving Net Zero and has been developing a national pipeline of projects. A significant number of the included schemes are from London boroughs. However, analysis has shown that many are still in early development stages and delivery plans still need considerable investment.

To deliver the investment that can help generate inclusive and sustainable growth for London and the UK, a new devolution and fiscal settlement is needed. This could build on and further develop the deals with Mayoral Combined Authorities as well as drawing on the ideas and principles set out in the London Finance Commission. This should be about longer-term funding certainty and enabling London to have greater control and flexibility over the proceeds of future growth. Enabling London leaders to utilise mechanisms like land value capture, tax increment financing, and business rate retention will enhance London's self-sufficiency and complement Levelling Up investment elsewhere.

The framework concludes with three core recommendations that will support London to expand its capacity, capability, and coordination to deliver strategic infrastructure investment that supports the vision of sustainable and inclusive economic growth for the capital.



### **Specialist delivery vehicles**

A range of partnership and delivery vehicles to create shared capacity and capabilities around specific infrastructure challenges and opportunities facing London

### **Devolved growth and investment deal**

London should develop a new growth, investment and devolution deal with a gainshare principle based on London generating a higher rate of growth for the UK, in return for being able to retain and invest more of the proceeds of locally-driven growth

### **Infrastructure delivery centre of expertise**

London should develop a central infrastructure development and delivery centre of expertise, bringing together GLA and London Councils' capacity to share specialist knowledge across London

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