



April 2026

## GPD-PN 02/26

### GMPP feasibility studies

Dear Chief Project Delivery Officers and Heads of Profession,

#### Issue

From April 2026, all new programmes and projects expecting to join the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) must first conduct an initial feasibility study.

This requirement applies primarily to work entering the GMPP in early development stages. For programmes or projects joining the GMPP later in the life cycle, an initial feasibility study will only be required where equivalent feasibility evidence has not already been generated through approved business case processes.

The new requirement is set out included in [HM Treasury's 'Treasury approval process for projects and programmes'](#), which has been updated today.

This policy note explains the new requirement and how to implement it. To support this, Government Project Delivery has also published a ['Guide to feasibility studies for programmes and projects'](#).

#### Action

Please share this policy note within your organisation and with your arm's-length bodies, so that senior responsible owners, project delivery professionals and others with an interest, for example investment committees, are aware of, and follow, the new requirement.

We would also welcome feedback on the new guide on feasibility studies.

#### Context

A feasibility study is a structured assessment of whether a proposed change is likely to be achievable and worthwhile in practice.

Feasibility studies are used across many sectors, including in government, in the early stages of a programme or project. They help set the work up for success, identify key risks and challenges, and reduce wasted time, effort and money further down the line. This early-phase focus applies both to prospective GMPP programmes and projects and to other priority areas identified by ministers where early feasibility assessment can strengthen delivery confidence.

[HM Treasury's 'Managing public money'](#) requires accounting officers to ensure projects are feasible so that the proposal can be implemented accurately, sustainably, and to the intended timetable with the resources available and without incurring wasteful or nugatory spend. Assessing the feasibility of government proposals is also a key part of business case development, but the way this is done can vary significantly.

In November 2025, the government committed to introducing mandatory feasibility studies for all new programmes and projects joining the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) following recommendations from the [Office of Value for Money](#).

The new requirement will help ensure that potential GMPP programmes and projects only proceed if they can be delivered, that decisions are based on realistic forecasts, and that there is clarity around objectives and key risks during the important early stages of the work.

## **What is the new requirement?**

All new programmes and projects expecting to join the GMPP must first conduct an initial feasibility study. The initial feasibility study should test whether the programme or project is viable before detailed work begins on the programme business case or strategic outline case.

The feasibility study will be part of the evidence considered under [HM Treasury's 'Treasury approval process for projects and programmes'](#) in deciding whether the programme or project should join the GMPP and the appropriate approval point.

The need for a feasibility study should be discussed as early as possible with your project delivery adviser in the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA). Programmes and projects likely to join the GMPP are usually also included in the NISTA early development portfolio. NISTA also supports early-stage development for other critical programmes and projects - such as place-based or broader growth-focused interventions - that may not ultimately join the GMPP but still benefit from robust early feasibility assessment to inform ministerial priorities.

If it isn't clear whether a project or programme meets the GMPP criteria, an initial feasibility study should be conducted, as the study will provide evidence for the decision.

Where NISTA agrees that the work should be managed as a departmental major project or other major project outside the GMPP, the department may decide to conduct an initial feasibility study, but there is no formal requirement to do so.

An initial feasibility study is not normally required retrospectively, for example where a programme or project joins the GMPP later in its life cycle, provided that clear evidence on feasibility has been provided in an approved business case. However, NISTA may still require

one, for example if there are concerns about technical feasibility or viability, or if the work is being reset.

## **Conduct and submission of an initial feasibility study**

The initial feasibility study should be commissioned and owned by the senior responsible owner (SRO) or another accountable person, for example the policy owner, as determined by the accounting officer.

The work should be overseen and managed within the sponsoring organisation. It should, however, have independent input to ensure an outside view and robust challenge, with at least two people from outside the organisation. This could include a non-executive director, people with expertise and experience from another organisation, or external advisers. The study should also be supported by external evidence, and by high-level benchmarking wherever possible.

The feasibility study should follow a standard structure, as set out at Annex A. It should be tailored to the scale and nature of the work, as advised by NISTA, and should cover the technical approach to delivering the key requirements or outcomes.

The study should not seek to assess the specific costs, benefits or risks of options, or identify a preferred solution at this stage. Its purpose is to test whether the proposal for change is likely to be achievable and worthwhile in line with the expectations set out in the brief for the work.

When completed, the feasibility study should be submitted to the SRO or accountable owner to consider the way forward, consulting the accounting officer and ministers as appropriate. If the decision is to continue, the feasibility study should be submitted with other required evidence to NISTA and HM Treasury in line with the approval process.

A summary of the study's findings should be included in the programme business case or strategic outline case, as appropriate, and in the published version of the business case. For a mega project, a summary should also be included in the published strategy and delivery plan. More guidance on transparency arrangements is set out in the treasury's approval process.

## **Guidance and support**

Government Project Delivery has also published a new guide on feasibility studies. It has been developed for new programmes and projects expecting to join the GMPP but is also useful for other considering conducting feasibility studies. Sign in to the website and go to the guide to give feedback.

NISTA project delivery advisers can provide further advice on the new requirement. Opportunity framing workshops and other tools in the [project set up toolkit published by the former Infrastructure and Projects Authority](#) can also provide valuable input for the initial feasibility study and should be used to support its development.

NISTA will monitor the working of the new requirement and will review as necessary. As ever, we welcome your support in making the new arrangements run smoothly so they help improve standards and public value across government.



## **Becky Wood**

Government Head of Function for Project Delivery

Chief Executive Officer, National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority

## **Annex A**

### **Structure for GMPP feasibility studies**

Initial feasibility studies should follow the standard structure below, tailored to the scale and nature of the work as advised by NISTA. It should include the following elements.

#### **Executive summary**

Summarise the proposal for change and the study's findings and recommendations.

#### **Context**

Set out the current situation and how it might change in future.

#### **Reasons for change**

Explain why change is needed or desirable, the evidence supporting this, and how it supports government objectives.

#### **Future vision**

Describe the objectives and expected outcomes from the change, and the theory of change supporting them.

#### **Strategic choices**

Outline the different choices available for achieving these objectives and outcomes, and what they would mean in practice. Explain what each would require in terms of technical delivery, and the possible scale of cost, time, benefit and other impacts.

#### **Considerations and constraints**

Identify the key considerations and constraining factors, and what they mean for different choices. These factors will depend very much on the nature of the work but consider:

- finance
- commercial
- legal
- technical and delivery requirements
- capability and capacity, both to deliver the change, and operate and manage it when delivered
- health, safety and security
- environment, biodiversity and sustainability
- equality, diversity and inclusion
- place-based, distributional and social impacts

## **Key risks and issues**

identify key strategic risks and issues to consider, and what they mean for decisions on choices.

## **Findings and recommendations**

Bring together the analysis from previous sections and make recommendations on:

- whether the changes and outcomes proposed appear achievable and worthwhile, based on the analysis of choices, considerations, constraints, risks and issues identified
- whether the analysis points towards one or more choices as ways forward
- recommendations on next steps, including any areas for further investigation or focus to reduce risk

## **Annexes**

Set out supporting evidence, modelling and benchmarking data.