

Green Cities, Infrastructure and Energy Programme

Guidance to Conducting Gateway Assurance Reviews

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| 1 | 20/03/2026 | Sarah Corry, Phil Brown |
| 2 | 23/03/2026 | Johnnie Hayes |
| 3 | 30/03/2026 | James Ballingall |
| | | |

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Introduction

Infrastructure development is vital to the prosperity and well-being of a country and its citizens, yet all too often lenders are unable to commit to projects because of the poor quality of their infrastructure proposals.

This Guidance offers a simple, internationally tested, quality assurance process designed to improve the quality of infrastructure business cases and bring them up to the standards required by international lenders. By a series of checks, at key stages of a project's development, weaknesses can be identified and improvements made, so that by the time the project comes to market both the Government itself and prospective lenders can have confidence that it has been properly developed and is deliverable. These checks are known as Gateway Reviews and this Guidance explains how they can be performed.

They may be used by any country around the world (irrespective of its legal or governmental system) and for infrastructure projects of any type at both central government level and local or regional level. They are commonly mandated for use where central government money is used but may also be used voluntarily where local government or international funding is used. The Gateway process is versatile and can be applied to both projects and programmes.

This Guidance sets out, in an easy-to-follow, step by step approach

- how Gateway Assurance Reviews should be planned, conducted and reported
- how Reviewers can use Workbooks and Report templates to provide clear, objective project assessments and
- how assurance processes safeguard and improve the overall quality of business cases over time.

It has been specifically designed for international use and will be valuable to:

- Project Owners (e.g. Government Ministries or Local Authorities)
 - internal boards tasked with overseeing/approving the development of an infrastructure project (e.g. project or programme supervisory boards)
 - external approval bodies (e.g. Treasury or Ministry of Finance) and
 - review teams tasked with conducting assurance reviews and assessing the quality or compliance of a project business case.
- It is helpful for the directors of projects too (and not something to be feared) since it enables issues and problems which may beset any project to be identified early in the development process and provides recommendations and actions to overcome them.

It is part of a suite of guidance documents comprising:

- the Infrastructure Business Case: International Guidance^[1]
- the **Gateway Review Workbooks**^[2] (linked in **Annex D**)
- the Gateway Assurance Report Template.^[3]

A Glossary of terms used is attached as Annex A.

^[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-international-guidance>

^[2] [https://www.gov.uk/search/guidance-and-regulation?organisations\[\]=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority&parent=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority](https://www.gov.uk/search/guidance-and-regulation?organisations[]=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority&parent=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority)

^[3] [https://www.gov.uk/search/guidance-and-regulation?organisations\[\]=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority&parent=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority](https://www.gov.uk/search/guidance-and-regulation?organisations[]=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority&parent=national-infrastructure-and-service-transformation-authority)

Part A: Why have Gateway Assurance Reviews?

1. The value of project assurance

“Assurance” is a review process designed to produce:

- An assessment for a Project Owner or approver that shows the assurance team’s confidence in a Project’s ability to meet its aims and objectives and
- Advice as to whether it has reached a sufficient stage of maturity to proceed to the next stage.

Project assurance processes:

- safeguard the use of public money
- stop bad projects from proceeding and
- make needed projects more likely to succeed and avoid delays.

The process should provide confidence to government and investors alike that, when the project comes to market, it has been properly developed and is likely to be viable. This is particularly important for infrastructure projects, which typically require significant upfront investment and involve long time horizons with uncertain returns. In this context, public funding secured at an early stage can act as a catalyst for private capital investment. Robust project assurance helps demonstrate that public finance is being deployed effectively, thereby crowding in private capital by reducing risk, improving credibility, and strengthening investor confidence.

Project Assurance is one of three key processes a government should put in place in order to improve the quality of their business cases and deliverability of their projects, namely:

- adoption of international best practice for the development of business cases as a matter of policy¹
- implementation of training programmes for Officials to give them the skills to write good business cases²
- establishment of a Quality Assurance process – to ensure that projects coming through the system are up to standard.

Gateway Assurance Reviews are reviews done at specific important points in a Project’s development, normally to inform an approval decision. They are distinct from:

- Approvals, which is a government or funding “Stop/Go” decision normally exercised by a relevant committee³ and
- Project Management, which is the ongoing delivery activity, and should complement (but not replace) audit, risk management or project management controls.

Some countries may not have a project assurance regime. In such cases this Gateway Review Process can provide the essential first step to creating a practical, internationally recognised mechanism for strengthening the quality, credibility, and deliverability of public infrastructure investments – and may help attract investors to your projects.

Governments may think that adopting the business case policy and training officials is sufficient without an assurance regime. Evidence shows however that countries which do not also set up a quality assurance process see only limited improvement to their project development. Assurance is a low cost, high value process designed to ensure that projects coming to market are properly prepared and “set up for success”; it drives continuous improvement across government as lessons learnt from one project can be reapplied across the system to raise the overall standard of future business case production.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-international-guidance>

² APMG training <https://apmg-international.com/product/infrastructure-business-cases-international>

³ See UK Treasury Approvals Process for projects and programmes – GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/treasury-approvals-process-for-programmes-and-projects>

It is helpful for the directors of projects too (and not something to be feared) since it enables issues and problems which may beset any project to be identified early in the development process and provides recommendations and actions to overcome them.

2. Gateway Reviews within the wider assurance framework

Gateway Reviews provide a snapshot of Delivery Confidence (being the likelihood of a project being delivered to time, cost and quality) at critical decision points in a project's development, and can provide the foundation on which to build a more comprehensive system of project Assurance and support to a project across its life^[1].

Gateway Assurance reviews provide approval boards with clear and unbiased advice before they make major decisions, in order to support informed, decision-making, more specifically they provide:

- independent assessment of a project at key points in its lifecycle
- confidence on the readiness of a project to progress to the next stage
- assessment as to whether a project is strategically justified, supported by robust analysis, deliverable, value for money and likely to meet its aims and objectives
- an assessment of the key risks, issues, obstacles and dependencies which the Project faces and recommendations on how problems may be addressed and delivery confidence increased.

Where projects involve multiple stakeholders (which may include international development partners or private investors, or different parts of Government) Gateway Reviews provide the additional benefit of promoting a shared understanding of project risks and issues across stakeholders, which in turn improves the quality and alignment of decision making and the Project's ability to overcome Obstacles.

^[1] See the UK's Assurance Review Tool Kit which provides detailed guidance and templates for the whole range of project assurance, including more detailed background and explanation of the Gateway Process <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/infrastructure-and-projects-authority-assurance-review-toolkit>

Part B: How to conduct Gateway Assurance Reviews

3. Who should Conduct Gateway Reviews?

To ensure an objective and impartial review, Gateway Reviews should be carried out by independent reviewers. They may be:

- senior officials from a different Ministry or public body than the sponsor
- officials from a team of experts specifically set up by Government to review business cases
- experts brought in from outside government or
- mixed teams combining both government and external expertise.

Not every country will have a pool of officials with relevant levels of assurance experience from the outset; in such cases the review team may need to be boosted with experts from outside government.

If a team, using people with different levels of experience, is put together, it is important that the team leader at least, is a person with sufficient prior assurance expertise to lead the process.

Having a central pool of experts is particularly useful for countries that split the approval process, with different Ministries approving different elements. Having one report that can be provided to all Ministries should avoid duplication and promote consistency across government.

Reviewers should be independent from the project being reviewed, so as to enable them to offer “constructive challenge” to the project team and avoid any hint of bias or suggestion that a Ministry is “marking its own homework”. It is normal for officials involved in developing a project to be overly optimistic as to its likely cost and timetable (a phenomenon known as “optimism bias”) and it will take an independent reviewer to recognise and avoid this.

Training for assurance reviewers may be developed and made available to prospective reviewers (especially if the relevant government is being supported by an international assistance programme) and a system of “reviewer accreditation” developed.⁴

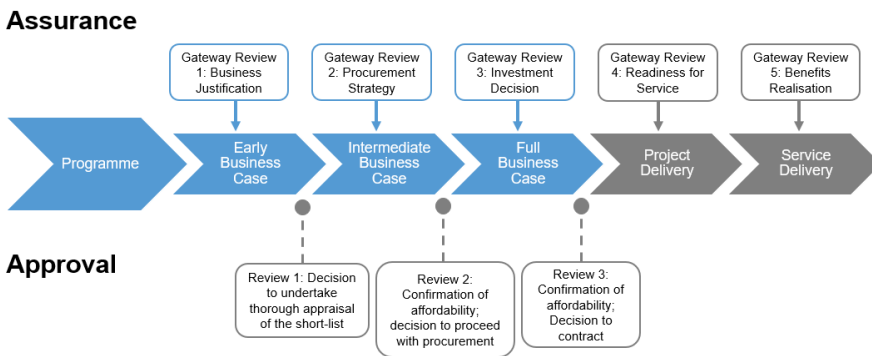
4. When should Gateway Reviews be held?

Assurance should be a progressive process, involving a number of different stages and reviews, so as to ensure that any issues are caught and dealt with early and that there are no surprises at the point of final approval.

An Assurance Review can happen at any time in the development of a project’s business case, but as a minimum should happen before the business case is submitted for an approval. Typically, there will be five assurance “Gateways” through which a project should pass.

⁴ APMG training <https://apmg-international.com/product/infrastructure-business-cases-international>

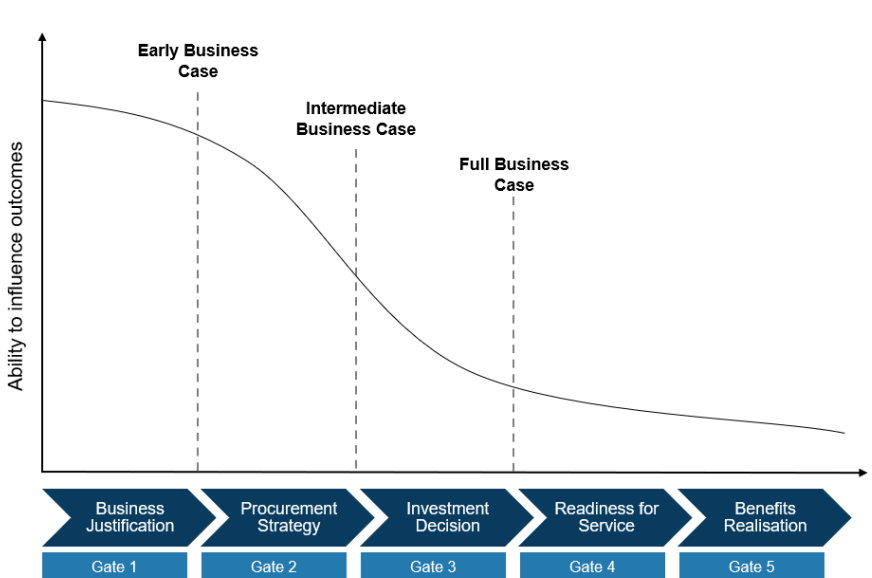
Figure 1 Assurance and Approval Workflows



At the beginning of a project, the project team should agree a clear assurance and approval pathway with the relevant assurance authority, so that everyone knows when Reviews should take place and how the assurance process feeds into the approval process.

Evidence shows that the most important stage of project development is the early stage – this is where the most important decisions about the project are made (see diagram below) and this is invariably where the biggest mistakes can be made. Accordingly, it is the first two Gateway assurances which are the most important and which will have the biggest impact on the project. A template for this can be found in Annex C.

The value of early-stage scrutiny and assurance cannot be over-stated. Helping teams fix issues early is an important function of Gate Reviews. Early identification and remedy are normally far less costly and time consuming than late-stage correction.



Commented [SC1]: [+ Diagram to be adjusted+]

Commented [JS2R1]: Replaced

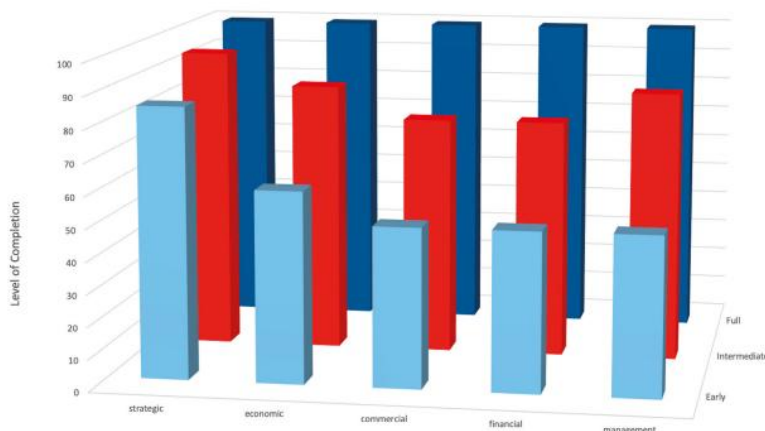
Gateway Reviews 1, 2 and 3 should be aligned to the three stages of the Infrastructure Business Case development. Each Review provides advice on whether the project is ready to progress to the next stage and what actions are needed before it can progress. Ministries should not however abdicate all responsibility for project assurance to any central approval or funding body, and accordingly Ministries should always approve their own project's business case first before sending it in for any central government funding approval.

Table 1: five gates of the Gateway Review process

| Gate number | Point in project lifecycle | Alignment with Infrastructure Business Case International Guidance |
|-------------|--|--|
| 1 | Strategic Assessment | Draft Early Business Case (EBC) |
| 2 | Business Justification | Draft Intermediate Business Case (IBC) |
| 3 | Investment Decision | Draft Full Business Case (FBC) |
| 4 | Readiness for Service | - |
| 5 | Operations Review and Benefits Realisation | - |

The first three Reviews recognise that the Business Case is still being developed. The focus of each of the first three Reviews accordingly shifts in line with the different levels of maturity of each of the different cases.

Figure 2: Level of completion of Early, Intermediate and Full Business Cases



Not every country has a three-stage business case development process – for instance some have only two (e.g. a Pre-Feasibility Study, or Early Business Case, Feasibility Study, and Intermediate Business Case). For those countries however, a Stage 3 Assurance Review can still be done (and in fact becomes even more important) just prior to contract signature.

Gates may be repeated where circumstances justify a further assessment. This is most common in projects that involve staged or phased delivery, multistage contracting processes, or phased operational commencement. Gate 4, which focuses on readiness for service, is especially sensitive to differences in project type and may need to be applied more than once when services, assets or systems are introduced in stages. A repeat Gate should be proportionate and tightly scoped. Rather than reassessing the full range of questions, the Review should concentrate on what has changed since the previous Gate, the issues that remain

unresolved, and any new risks, assumptions or dependencies that have emerged. This ensures that repeat Reviews remain focused, efficient and responsive to the project's development without duplicating earlier work.

5. Scope of the Gateway Reviews

Gateway Reviews should be proportionate to the size, risk and complexity of the project. Large, high-risk infrastructure projects may require full reviews at each gate, whereas smaller or lower-risk projects may use tailored or lighter-touch approaches⁵. A small project, which only has a single stage development process⁶, should only require a one Gate appraisal process (using the report template). Annex B summarises the focus of each of the five Gateways.

Gateway Reviews draw on the Five-Case Model principles set out in the Infrastructure Business Case International Guidance; these provide a structured way to assess a project against the following dimensions:

- Strategic Case – ongoing need, strategic alignment, and contribution to wider objectives.
- Economic Case – value for money.
- Commercial Case – commercial viability, procurement strategy, and contract arrangements.
- Financial Case – affordability, funding certainty, and financial sustainability.
- Management Case – deliverability, governance, capability, risk management, and readiness.

The Gate Reviews also include high-level tests relating to net zero, climate resilience and environmental performance. These are designed to reflect international expectations for sustainable infrastructure. These checks help ensure projects deliver long-term economic, environmental and social value, in line with international commitments.

6. Reviews for Smaller Projects

Small projects may only need a “one stage”, rather than a “three stage”, development process. Where this occurs, it should only be necessary to have a single Gate Review.

7. Reviews for Programmes

This Guidance can be applied to Programmes as well as Projects. Gateway 1 (Strategic Review) will be particularly relevant for Programmes. Other Gateways can also be used for Programmes especially where there has been any material change to the Programme or its strategic context. Programme Reviews should in any event pay particular attention to:

- the strategic alignment of the Programme over time
- the strategic alignment of Projects within the Programme
- any dependencies between projects in the programme and
- how benefits at project level contribute to programme-level outcomes.

They should also recommend how Projects within the Programme should be assured in the future. Depending on the Delivery Confidence there is in the Project Owner (e.g. a Ministry), it may not be necessary for every Project within it to be reviewed (e.g. a sample may suffice) and where Reviews are required, it may be sufficient for strategic issues to be largely dealt with by reference to the overall Programme case.

8. How to plan and conduct a Gateway Review

An Assurance Review is not a “tick box” exercise. It should involve a qualitative assessment of the state, and likelihood of success, of a project and be based on interviews with key members of the project team as well as consideration of project documents.

⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/623b24d18fa8f540e78ab465/Infrastructure_Business_Case_International_Guidance_-_Annexes.pdf

⁶ See 5 case Guidance Annex B

The review team should review relevant documents in advance of the relevant Review (see below). Where review teams feel that the quality of the documents could be improved, or that there are gaps, then this should be mentioned in the Review report. However, Gate Reviews are not desktop exercises and reviewers should expect to engage directly with the project team through interviews and discussion to test assumptions and verify information.

Reviewers should provide constructive challenge (to ensure that issues are properly investigated and not “skimmed over”) especially where there appear to be gaps or deficiencies in evidence but should remain polite and business-like at all times. The object of the assurance exercise is to improve project quality and Delivery Confidence, not allocate blame.

Before each interview, interviewees should be asked to speak openly and frankly about the project, and be told that their views will remain confidential, with only general findings (not attributed to any individual) going into the report. Often project team members will welcome an opportunity to speak frankly about a project. Ideally interviews would take place in person, however on-line interviews are an alternative.

Step-by-step Guide to conducting a Review and writing the Report

Gateway Reviews are an intensive process and review team members should expect to allocate several whole days to the exercise (up to 5 for a major project) during which they should expect to meet with the rest of the review team and attend the interviews in person.

1. The Team leader and team (with a suitable range of expertise) should be appointed at least 4 weeks prior to the Review.
2. Next the Team leader should have an initial talk with the Project Owner to agree:
3. The terms of reference (ToR) for the Review, based on the workbook and any specific areas of concern or focus areas the Project Owner would like explored
4. Timetable and dates
5. The documents to be reviewed in relation to the ToR
6. Who needs to be interviewed, for example project leaders, technical specialists, delivery partners and stakeholders, and
7. Other logistics
8. The number of interviews should be no more than 15 for a 5-day review, and each should last no longer than 45 minutes.
9. The Project Owner invites people for interview with the review team on the agreed dates. Interviews in person are encouraged, but where this is not feasible on-line interviews may be held.
10. At least one week prior to the Review, key documents are to be provided; these should include a briefing document (explaining the project and what stage of development it has reached), the latest Business Case, a copy of any prior Gateway Review/report, minutes of the recent meetings of Project Team and Supervisory Board, and, where relevant, Risk register, Benefits Register and Budget.
11. The review team meets to plan the Review and consider the relevant Review Workbook, which sets out the focus of the relevant Review and look at the documents provided to identify any areas of weakness or issues which require validation.
12. The Project Owner should attend the review team planning meeting to provide an overview of the project, which may include any issues it is facing, and answer any questions.
13. The relevant Workbook for the Gate Review will list “Lines of Enquiry”, which the team should explore in interviews and documentary reviews. They should tailor the questions according to the project’s maturity, scale, risk and country context. Not every question carries equal weight. The aim is to focus on the material issues that influence Delivery Confidence. The Lines of Enquiry should be allocated between the team members.
14. Interviews take place using (a) the suggested “lines of enquiry” from the Workbook and (b) questions on any other emerging issues.
15. The team should note their findings as they go and collaborate to assess evidence, consider risks, gaps and strengths, align findings and list emerging themes at the end of each day; where different

members of the project team provide different answers, they may need to investigate such issues further.

16. The review team leader should keep in touch with the Project Owner and brief him on significant findings as the review progresses so that the final report findings do not come as a surprise.
17. Drafting of the report is usually started on the afternoon of the penultimate day and issued in draft form to the Project Owner at midday on the final day. The report should include the Delivery Confidence assessment, together with a list of key issues and recommendations.
18. The Key findings would normally be presented to the Project Owner when the draft is handed over.
19. The Project Owner is then given one week to check for factual inaccuracies and add any comment of their own; however, it is not expected that they could ask for any substantive change to the report.
20. The report is then issued.
21. Risk Assessment

Gateway reviews are a risk-based exercise and should focus on:

- key risks, issues or concerns to the deliverability of the project and
- Obstacles (which may stand in the way of successful project delivery) and
- Recommendations as to how problems and Obstacles should be addressed

Recommendations should be directly aligned to the relevant risk and Obstacle.

The review team should make their assessments based on the interviews and documents reviewed. In the interviews they should pursue the lines of enquiry set out in the relevant Workbook. They may, for their own benefit, grade each criteria Red, Amber or Green, but these ratings are for the benefit of the reviewers only and do not go into the final Report. They should then consider how these impact on the three key review criteria of time, cost and quality (see below).

Time

| Colour | Criteria Description |
|--------|---|
| Green | The project is on or ahead of schedule. |
| Amber | The project is behind schedule but has realistic plans to recover. |
| Red | The project is behind schedule and is likely to be delivered late. The project plan is likely to require re-baselining. |

Cost

| Colour | Criteria Description |
|--------|--|
| Green | The project costs are on, or below, budget. |
| Amber | The project costs are over budget but with realistic plans to recover. |
| Red | The project costs are likely to be over budget to a degree that re-baselining will be necessary. |

Quality (likelihood of delivering benefits)

| Colour | Criteria Description |
|--------|--|
| Green | The project is confident of delivering the expected benefits. |
| Amber | The project is experiencing some issues in its ability to deliver benefits but the situation is recoverable. |
| Red | Benefits delivery is at serious risk. |

At the end of this process review, the review team will need to make a Delivery Confidence Assessment of the project as a whole – the likelihood of it being delivered to time, cost and quality. They should use the following a Delivery Confidence colour rating system for this as follows:

| Success Rating | Criteria Description |
|----------------|---|
| Green | <p>Successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality appears highly likely – there are no major outstanding risks.</p> <p>Recommendation: The project is ready to proceed to the next stage.</p> |
| Amber | <p>Successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality appears feasible but significant issues exist requiring management. These appear resolvable at this stage and, if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun.</p> <p>Recommendation: This project can proceed to the next stage with conditions, but the project must report back on the satisfaction of each condition within an agreed timeframe.</p> |
| Red | <p>Successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality appears to be unachievable. There are major issues which do not appear to be manageable or resolvable at this stage. Re-baselining and/or viability re-assessment may be required.</p> <p>Recommendation: This project should not proceed to the next phase until these major issues are managed to an acceptable level of risk and viability re-confirmed.</p> |

A Red rating does not mean cancellation for a project. It signals that the project is not ready yet and has issues which need fixing prior to passing through the Gate. The review team should still make recommendations as to necessary corrective action. In some cases, reviewers may apply a conditional pass (Amber rating), allowing the project to move forward while requiring specific issues to be addressed within a specified period or before the next Gate.

9. How to write a Gateway Report

Each Gate Review should produce a short report, using the relevant template, summarising:

- key findings;
- the overall Delivery Confidence rating (Green, Amber, Red)
- risks and Obstacles
- any conditions for progression; and
- clear, actionable recommendations.

Reports may also highlight examples of good practice that can be shared with other projects.

Report Focus

Annex B to each of the Gate Workbooks sets out the Criteria or “Lines of Enquiry” which should be used for reporting on each Gateway. Reports are expected to be concise, concentrating only on the important issues that apply at the relevant Gateway.

To help marshal your thoughts, each of the Criteria has a set of “hints” or questions you might ask yourself to help you evaluate the material, make a qualitative judgement and reach a conclusion.

Recording Risks, Evidence and Recommendations

The review team should focus on identifying and recording any risks or other problems affecting the project’s deliverability; and each risk/problem should be identified in the body of the report. Risks/problems may relate to any strategic, economic, commercial, financial, management, political, legal or other area. In each case however a link should be made between the risk/concern and project team’s ability to deliver to time, cost and quality, since these determine the overall Delivery Confidence Rating of the project. Each risk/problem should be accompanied by a corresponding Recommendation, which should be specific and timebound.

Identified risks should be considered as regards both likelihood and impact.

The impact of the risk or problem should be discussed with the Project Team as part of the review process, with a view to developing a clear recommendation.

The review team should record their Recommendations in the report and show the key risks and problems that they address. Recommendations should be listed in priority order of impact and should be recorded as Urgent, Important or Recommended (see definitions below):

- **Urgent (Do Now):** To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of great importance that the project should act immediately.
- **Important (Do By):** To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome for the project, action should be taken by [date or milestone]. *[Note – whenever possible Important risk-based recommendations should be linked to project milestones (e.g. before contract signature) or a specified timeframe (e.g. within the next three months)].*
- **Recommended:** The project should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation by [date or milestone] *[Note to review teams – if possible, these remedial actions should be linked to programme/project milestones (e.g. before contract signature) and/or a specified timeframe (e.g. within the next three months)].*

Table 2 Example of Recommendation and Milestone Actions Report

| Priority | Recommendation | Risk/ Issue + Evidence | Classification | Timing + Deadline |
|----------|------------------------------|--|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Revise the project timetable | There was broad consensus that the overall timetable was too ambitious and that the "start on site" date will not be met. The later any project re-scheduling take place, the more damaging and disruptive it will be for the overall programme and its credibility | Urgent | Immediate |

As a guide, it is suggested that no more than 6 to 8 risk-based recommendations are given in the assurance review report.

Obstacles to delivery

The review should also consider, and report on, any serious Obstacles to delivery that would severely impact time, cost, quality and also any critical "dependency" (for example a project may be part of a larger programme and may depend on other parts of the programme being completed first). The review should also consider at what level the Obstacle or dependency sits; for example, the project may be:

- Awaiting ministerial decision in its own department;
- Awaiting ministerial decision in other departments;
- Awaiting Treasury spending decision
- Awaiting the results of a local election.

For each Obstacle the review team should explain why it cannot be overcome (at least in the short term) and provide a suggested escalation or mitigation route. It is important to include any critical path or key dates by which each Obstacle must be resolved to manage or reduce impact. Dependencies should also be noted (though there may not be an escalation route needed and they may simply need to be kept under review).

The team may, in particular, want to consider the materiality of any Obstacle, since this may suggest a Red Delivery Confidence assessment.

Table 3 Example of Obstacles and Consequences Report

| Ref. # | Obstacle / Dependency | Describe the specific nature of the Obstacle | Consequence + mitigation/escalation plan and timeline | Timing |
|--------|-----------------------|--|---|--------|
|--------|-----------------------|--|---|--------|

| | | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Planning permission | <p>The project cannot proceed to procurement until outline planning permission has been obtained from the local council</p> <p>The planning decision will not be made until after the forthcoming local election.</p> | <p>Critical path delay.</p> <p>Engage with the new council</p> | Immediately after the election |
|----|---------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|

10. Follow Up to the Report

Following the Report, the project team should prepare an action plan with named people responsible and timelines for each recommendation. The project's Delivery Confidence should be monitored over subsequent Gates, ensuring that:

- recommendations are acted upon;
- risks are reduced;
- the project remains aligned with strategic objectives and
- Delivery Confidence is maintained or increased.

Gateway Reports should be shared with approval bodies and senior management. Reviews may also help any international lender to understand whether the project is ready to progress, and what support or action may be required before a funding commitment can be made. Reports are not generally made available to the public (unless legally required) since this could affect the candour of the interviews and the clarity of the report.

Annex A: Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Appraisal | The assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options: comparing different options. Projects: considering the overall state of a project (objectives, options, costs, benefits, risks, uncertainty) before reaching a decision. |
| Assurance | A review process producing (1) an assessment showing confidence in the project's ability to meet aims and objectives, and (2) advice on whether it is mature enough to proceed to the next stage. |
| Assurance and approvals plan | A plan detailing the scheduling, coordination, and provision of assurance activities and approval points throughout the project life. |
| Authority | A local or central public sector body that may commission a project. |
| Business as Usual | The option that continues current arrangements, providing a benchmark ("Do Nothing" option). |
| Change management | Plans/approaches for managing organisational change, supported by a strategy and plan explaining goals and how to achieve them. |
| Contingency | Cash or resources allocated to cover costs of potential risks. |
| Cost benefit analysis | Socio-economic analysis comparing project options and their welfare effects, quantifying as many costs and benefits as feasible. |
| Critical success factors (CSFs) | High priority objectives against which project success is judged. |
| Delivery Confidence | The likelihood of a project delivering the agreed outputs to time, cost and quality. |
| Discounting | Converting future costs and benefits into present values using a discount rate. |
| Early Business Case | First stage of business case development, focusing on the Strategic and Economic Cases, establishing strategic need and a shortlist of options. |
| Economic analysis | Assessment of costs and benefits to society using cost-benefit analysis plus qualitative assessments. |
| Environmental and social impact assessment | Assessment of potential environmental and social impacts before deciding to move forward with a project. |
| Environmental and social impact risks | Risks of negative consequences from impacts (or perceived impacts) on the environment or communities. |
| Financing | Up-front borrowing and/or investment used to pay for capital costs. |
| Five Case Model (5CM) | Framework for business case development covering Strategic, Economic, Commercial, Financial and Management Cases. |
| Full Business Case | Third business case stage, focusing on procurement and updating key cases after negotiations. |

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| Funding | Income source used to repay up-front finance over the project's life. |
| G20 Principles | The 2018 "G20 Principles for the Infrastructure Project Preparation Phase." |
| Gateway approach | A process involving assurance review points ("gates") before central government approval, aligned with UK Treasury processes. |
| Gender and Inclusion | <p>Gender equality and women's economic empowerment; inclusive growth for excluded groups (women, youth, people with disabilities, rural communities).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability: Long-term mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various attitudinal, informational and environmental barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. • Disability inclusion: A process that actively seeks to ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities as empowered self-advocates in all development processes and emergency responses. Specifically, disability inclusion addresses barriers that hinder access to key services and employment opportunities, and highlights ways to improve health and social wellbeing outcomes. • Gender: Socially constructed roles, attributes, opportunities and relationships that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. While many societies recognise that there are more than two genders, for the purposes of this analysis we focus on men and women. Expectations relating to gender differ from society to society and change over time. • Gender equality: Women having the same opportunities in life as men, including equal access to services, equal pay for equal work, equal participation in decision-making, etc. • Social inclusion: The process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity. |
| Intermediate Business Case | Second and most substantial stage, assessing shortlisted options to determine the preferred option and establishing resources and arrangements. |
| Life cycle costs | Costs of an asset over its useful life, including dismantling (Whole-Life Costs). |
| MDB | Multilateral Development Bank. |
| Objectives | Targeted project outcomes made SMART for evaluation purposes. |
| Optimism bias | Tendency to be over-optimistic about costs, benefits, and delivery timelines. |
| Option appraisal | Examining options and weighing costs, benefits, risks, uncertainties before making a decision. |
| Outcomes | Consequences to society as a whole resulting from a project. |
| Outputs | Change in level or quality of service delivered. |
| Preferred approach | Best ranking solution at Early Business Case stage (not yet the preferred option). |
| Preferred option | Option offering best value after detailed economic appraisal at Intermediate Business Case stage. |
| Programme | Coordinated activities pursuing a long-term goal; may group multiple related projects. |

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| Project Owner | The senior person who represents and champions the Project within the relevant Ministry or Local Authority and who has overall responsibility for the success of the Project. The Project Owner is not part of the project executive team but will chair the supervisory board overseeing the Project. In the UK this person is known as the "Senior Responsible Officer". Guidance setting out the responsibilities of the Project Owner/SRO can be found at https://projectdelivery.gov.uk/library-product/the-role-of-the-senior-responsible-owner/ |
| Public Value | Net measure of social welfare resulting from a project, including all benefits and costs. |
| Qualitative risk/benefits | Risks/benefits not easily measurable in financial terms. |
| Quantitative risk/benefits | Risks/benefits measurable in financial terms. |
| Risk | Possibility of a negative event affecting the project. |
| Sensitivity analysis | Process of varying key variables to model their impacts in cost benefit analysis. |
| Shortlist | Shortlist of project options taken forward for detailed economic analysis. |
| SMART objectives | Objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound. |
| Sustainable development | Development meeting present needs without compromising future generations. |
| UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) | 17 global goals set for 2030 on poverty, inequality, climate, environment, prosperity, peace and justice. |
| Value for money (VfM) | Optimum combination of whole-life costs and quality/fitness-for-purpose. |

Annex B: Focus of Each Gateway

For Gateway 1

Objective: Review of the Project and its Early Business Case, concentrating in particular on its strategic justification, to see if the Project is ready to progress to its detailed planning and development stage

Timing: On completion of the Early Business Case

For Gateway 2

Objective: Review of the Project and its Intermediate Business Case to consider if the Project is ready to “go to market”, having completed its options analysis, selected a preferred option, and finalised procurement plans

Timing: Prior to launching the procurement process

For Gateway 3

Objective: Review of the Project and its Full Business Case (being the Intermediate Business Case “updated for reality”, to take into account the actual data from the preferred bid and the final form of contract)

Timing: following completion of procurement and contract negotiations and prior to contract signature

For Gateway 4

Objective: Review of the Project to see if it is ready for service commencement

Timing: following completion of construction and prior to commencement of service

For Gateway 5

Objective: An operations review of the Project to see if it is delivering its expected benefit

Timing: After service delivery has reached steady state and has built a reasonable track record – commonly two years after service commencement

N.B. This review can be repeated later in the project life cycle (e.g. after 10 years of service)

Annex C: Integrated Assurance and Approvals Plan (IAAP) template

Integrated Assurance and Approval Document

This document should be completed by the project manager/business case authors and the approving authority prior to preparing the business case.

The purpose of this document is to set out an initial high-level scope for the project, agree the type of business case required, and agree what assurance and approval steps will be applied.

The anticipated coverage of the Business Case should be agreed in order to calibrate the analysis required, and to assist the business case review and approvals process.

| Integrated Assurance and Approval Document | |
|--|--|
| Organisation/Department | |
| Proposal Title | |
| Sponsor/ Senior responsible owner | |
| Agreed type of Business Case: | Programme Business Case Project Business Case Early Intermediate Full Case for small projects |

| Date | Version | Revision history | Document reviewer |
|------|---------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
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| Project overview | |
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| What is the expected spend for delivering the project? | |
| What is the strategic aim of the project? | |
| What is the potential scope of the project? | |
| What is the expected procurement approach? | |
| What is the high-level timetable for the project? | |

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| What are the potential land and consent issues? | |
| What are the potential ESIA issues? | |
| Could the project be suitable for PPP treatment? | |
| Is this likely to be a standard project or a complex project? | |
| What are the principal risks, constraints and dependencies? | |
| Is the current capability of the project team sufficient to deliver the project? | |

The Business Case will follow the following Assurance and Approval Steps.

| | |
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| What are the key risks and decisions requiring assurance | |
| What is the timetable for assurance and approval activities and decisions | |
| What resources and funding is required for the assurance | |
| What type of review team is needed | |
| Who will be responsible for managing the assurance activity | |

Completed by:

Project manager / representative:

Approving authority's representative.....

Date

Date agreed for next review (if required)

Annex D: Links to relevant documents

- [Link to Gate 1 Workbook](#)
- [Link to Gate 2 Workbook](#)
- [Link to Gate 3 Workbook](#)
- [Link to Gate 4 Workbook](#)
- [Link to Gate 5 Workbook](#)
- [Link to review template](#)