

Press release

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CECA: 2026 Budget Pipeline Commitment Must Deliver Procurement Timetables, Not Totals

Civils contractors today welcomed the Government's commitment to publish an updated Infrastructure Pipeline and additional capital for the National Wealth Fund in the 2026 Budget, but urged Ministers to turn headline figures into funded, procurable schemes.

The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) said the £20.4 billion announced in the Budget, stemming from additional capital for the National Wealth Fund and the British Business Bank, could help unlock investment and support growth across the UK. The Budget also confirmed that an updated Infrastructure Pipeline will be published before the end of the year.

However, CECA said the value of the Pipeline will depend on whether it gives industry the detail needed to plan ahead for recruiting workers, taking on apprentices, investing in equipment and allocating bidding resources. The information it provides must include procurement dates, routes to market, project-level workforce data, and project funding status.

Commenting, CECA Director of Policy & Public Affairs Ben Goodwin said: "For CECA members, the test of this Budget is how quickly its commitments become procurement opportunities and work on the ground.

"We welcome the commitment to publish an updated Infrastructure Pipeline by the end of 2026. In CECA's Budget submission we called for a funded, sequenced programme and a pipeline that works as a practical market tool. To do that, it needs procurement dates, routes to market and reliable workforce data at project level, not just a headline total.

"Additional capital for the National Wealth Fund is welcome, and the Government is right to emphasise protecting capital investment. But financing capacity cannot replace public funding when there is no commercial revenue stream. Ministers should be clear how today's measures support the wider programme.

"We also welcome the expectation that apprentices make up at least 3% of the workforce on large government construction and infrastructure projects. CECA members are committed to training the next generation. For this to work, government must ensure that taking on and supervising apprentices is affordable for contractors, particularly specialist firms and SMEs.

"Faster planning decisions matter too, but the planning bodies behind them need the resources to turn reform into delivery. Greater powers for local leaders can help address barriers to growth, and the additional capacity funding for mayors is a step in the right direction.

"The priority now is to bring funded schemes to market and give industry a reliable programme of future work. That is how we turn investment commitments into jobs, growth and better infrastructure for businesses and communities across the UK."

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Notes to editors

1. The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) represents over 300 contractors of all sizes, covering approximately 80% of the civil engineering market in Great Britain. Our members build infrastructure that provides the basis for economic sustainability and quality of life in communities across the country.