



THE IMPORTANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE NORTH EAST

CIVIL ENGINEERING, GROWTH AND JOBS FOR THE REGION

“Britain will not be able to compete in the modern world unless we improve our infrastructure.”

HM Treasury, National Infrastructure Plan 2011, 29 November 2011

In 2010 the construction sector in the North East generated £4.5bn and employed over 100,000 people. Civil engineering forms a major part of the UK construction industry, which across the UK consists of 300,000 firms employing 2 million people and accounts for 8.3% of the nation's Gross Value Added (2008), and turned over £92bn in 2009.

Civil engineers are responsible for designing, building and maintaining about 60% of the non-housing construction sector. Their work in the region has a value approaching £1bn per annum, with 75% of our work being in the public sector. The profession helps to create the structures and systems that sustain society. Civil engineers provide society with the infrastructure that makes it function: bridges, roads, railways, docks, office buildings, hospitals, schools, airports, power stations, flood defences, utility supplies, water treatment facilities...the list goes on!

This publication has been prepared by the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE), the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) and the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE). Our aim is to raise awareness of the importance of civil engineering in the North East and the impact it has on the region's economy, communities and environment.

As the voice of civil engineering in the North East, we comment on and aim to influence the decisions that affect the future funding of infrastructure in the area. Through our local offices we are passionate about the success we want to see in the region in the years to come. Each organisation wants to continue and further improve its engagement with decision makers in the North East through the provision of expert advice.

Civil engineering companies currently employ 50,000 people in the region and can recruit large numbers of people quickly to generate employment

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REGIONAL GROWTH

“Infrastructure networks form the backbone of a modern economy and are a major determinant for growth and productivity.”

HM Treasury, National Infrastructure Plan 2011, 29 November 2011

Infrastructure investment fuels economic growth for the long term, making businesses and industry and their goods and services more competitive.

From the provision of a small playground extension at a local school to the construction of new roads and services feeding a business park, the civil engineering industry plays a key role in developing the North East economy and improving the way we live.

Improved road and rail links, reliable service supplies, efficient public transport and protection from flooding encourage new businesses to establish in the North East. In addition, the civil engineering industry and its supply chain has an important direct contribution to the North East economy.

The Government has identified the need to rebalance the economy toward greater private sector activity. While the current state of the economy poses challenges of affordability for infrastructure improvements, it is essential that industry, Government and developers seek ways of ensuring that vital developments can take place.

CREATING JOBS AND DEVELOPING SKILLS

“It is through making sure everyone has the opportunity to gain skills that the benefits of renewed growth can extend throughout our society.”

BIS, Skills for Sustainable Growth, November 2010

There is a clear need to create long-term high value employment opportunities in our region. The civil engineering industry is already a large employer; employing people with a diverse range of skills from labourers and operatives through the trades such as plumbers and electricians, to management and professional engineers. It is an industry spread across the region, with many employers being rooted in their local communities, employing local people and using local suppliers.

Civil engineering companies can rapidly create employment opportunities in response to market demand. Consistent investment in infrastructure development will in this way quickly create and sustain employment and training opportunities in the civil engineering industry.

The industry and the region's education establishments have a strong commitment to providing training to those within and entering the profession of civil engineering. Maintaining a highly skilled, well educated workforce is essential to the prosperity of the profession and this is achieved by close collaboration between industry and academia, supported by ACE, CECA and ICE.

We train over 1200 new apprentices and graduates every year, even during the current recession – preparing ourselves for emerging markets such as off-shore energy generation

SECURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS

“Sustainable development is all about people's fundamental needs and quality of life: its goal is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.”

Lord Henley, February 2011

Sustainable development means that the projects we undertake:

- Are affordable to build, operate and maintain
- Have a positive impact on nature, its resources and the environment
- Deliver a benefit to society

This is important to ensure that our actions today to meet our own needs do not prevent future generations from meeting their own needs.

Balancing these aspects is a challenge on every project, but a challenge that civil engineers are well equipped to overcome.

We are already working with the energy industry to develop off-shore power generation. North East businesses are world leaders in renewable energy and our universities are developing innovative power sources for the future.

ACE, CECA and ICE will support sustainable development and the growth of green industries within the region and specifically to promote investment in infrastructure to foster and nourish these opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

This is a critical time for infrastructure investment and delivery. The North East needs to secure its future in a difficult economic environment. Progress will be dependent upon industry, Government and local authorities working together to deliver the infrastructure the North East needs to compete.

The North East's competitiveness depends on better connectivity with other parts of the UK and Europe. Transport, energy, utilities and waste infrastructure provide a platform for creating jobs, growing businesses and improving communities.

Co-operation is needed between local authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnerships and the private sector to produce an infrastructure strategy that will deliver economic growth in the region. The strategy needs to identify clear priorities and be founded on a robust evidence base, to secure investment.

Together we will be speaking to stakeholders in order to help prepare the strategy and to deliver the infrastructure we need to ensure the North East remains open for business.



ACE, the Association for Consultancy and Engineering, represents the business interests of the consultancy and engineering industry in the UK. It is the leading business association in this field, with around 600 companies large and small as members, operating across many different disciplines. ACE members contribute as much as £8bn per year to the UK economy, and collectively employ 90,000 people.

CONTACT: David Hodgson, Regional Chairman, ACE North East

T: 01325 481941 **E:** David@ampconsultants.com



CECA (NE), the Civil Engineering Contractors Association, has around 70 members across North East England ranging from multinational PLCs to SMEs working in their communities. CECA members carry out approximately 80% of North East civil engineering outturn.

CONTACT: Douglas Kell, Director/Secretary, CECA North East

T: 0191 2280900 **E:** kellceca@aol.com



ICE, the Institution of Civil Engineers, is a UK charitable learned society that promotes and progresses civil engineering. It is the professional body which provides professional qualifications to civil engineers, and has over 80,000 members world-wide. Its North East members work throughout the country, not only in design, construction, utility and energy companies, but also in the public sector as policy advisers and delivery agents for many large infrastructure projects.

CONTACT: Stephen Larkin, Regional Director, ICE North East

T: 07920 788 771 or 0191 266 0779 **E:** Stephen.Larkin@ice.org.uk