

03

LEADERSHIP
CASE STUDY

Delivering Growth Deal investment in line with national and regional carbon budgets: Wales

Actor: **Ambition North Wales**

Project: **Reducing carbon emissions and improving biodiversity in Growth Deal projects**

Ambition North Wales is a partnership between six local authorities, two universities and two further-education institutions, which are responsible for delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal. The UK and Welsh governments have each invested £120m (£240m total), and Ambition North Wales is tasked with delivering a total investment package of £1bn in the region over the next 10-15 years.

Projects are being developed across key growth areas: agri-food and tourism, high-value manufacturing, digital connectivity, land and property, and low-carbon energy. The goal is to build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales. Within the boundary of a project, Ambition North Wales understands the investment will have a carbon impact that could affect regional and national targets. To limit this, it has set targets for project teams (and their value chains) for: net-zero operational carbon; 40% less embodied carbon from the project's preferred option baseline at outline business case (OBC); and a 10% net gain for biodiversity.

To support project teams, and to ensure a consistent approach across all projects, Ambition North Wales has developed an assessment methodology for project teams to follow. Its purpose is to give step-by-step guidance for each Growth Deal project to set an assessment boundary, quantify a baseline and reduce overall impact. It is structured according to HM Treasury business-case development stages and complements the Green Book economic appraisal approach.

At each business-case stage, carbon and biodiversity assessments will be undertaken. In the early stages, these assessments are more qualitative, becoming more rigorous and quantitative as the project design takes shape. Importantly, they ask projects to develop an understanding of the impacts beyond the project boundary – with a formal project baseline being completed by the OBC.

The application of the methodology is still in its infancy and is currently being rolled out across the full portfolio of projects. Therefore, its effectiveness in delivering portfolio-wide carbon reduction is still to be tested. However, the approach taken demonstrates excellent leadership from Ambition North Wales in application of core decarbonisation principles.