

## York and North Yorkshire’s Routemap to Carbon Negative – Consultation Feedback

### Summary Report for “Environment: Land Use, Agriculture & Marine” Section

The initial draft of York and North Yorkshire’s Routemap to Carbon Negative went out to consultation between the 28<sup>th</sup> February and 17<sup>th</sup> March. The consultation aimed to gather feedback on the draft Routemap, with a specific focus on the “strategic priorities” and “actions plans”.

This report provides a summary of key themes from the consultation feedback focused on the Land Use, Agriculture & Marine section of the Routemap.

Questions	Key themes from stakeholder feedback
<p>Are we focusing on the right strategic priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was strong support for the <b>addition of ‘marine’ priorities</b> to the Routemap, however, stakeholders felt that the <b>priorities and actions could be better-developed</b>.</li> <li>• The Routemap should <b>reflect the connectivity</b> between in-land and coastal waterbodies – e.g., ‘protecting regenerating landscapes and coastal water quality’.</li> <li>• Several stakeholders noted the <b>importance of biodiversity</b> in helping deliver <b>more resilient landscapes</b> that can help deliver the targets set out in the Routemap.</li> <li>• Whilst there was support for the priorities being ambitious, there was <b>some concern</b> that <b>national legislation</b> or incentives will be needed to achieve the <b>pace of change</b>. Capital investment is emphasised in the Routemap, but the <b>communication around new practices</b> such as precision farming, and integrated pest management also <b>needs to be considered</b>.</li> <li>• Some stakeholders noted a <b>missed opportunity to better incorporate CE</b> in this section.</li> <li>• Recognition of <b>productivity growth</b> requirements are welcome. Existing productivity growth in farming is less than 1% per annum and lags major competitors across the EU.</li> <li>• Should the <b>decarbonisation of farm machinery</b> be listed as an ‘ambition’ – is it <b>comparable in scale</b> to other ambitions listed?</li> <li>• The ambition to <b>improve manure management</b> is <b>somewhat vague</b> and needs to be described in more detail so it can be <b>tracked and evidenced</b>.</li> <li>• Concern that without a <b>reduction in land use</b> set aside for <b>animal farming</b>, it may be difficult to achieve <b>significant changes in carbon emissions</b> from the land, apart from in specific areas such as peatlands.</li> <li>• Other stakeholders were concerned that the scale of ambition for 38,000 hectares of new woodland would <b>reduce land for agricultural production</b>, risking an <b>increase in imported food</b> with a high carbon footprint.</li> </ul>
<p>Have we missed any priorities that you feel are important?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several stakeholders felt that <b>more data is needed</b> to help properly <b>establish the baseline</b> that the Agri section is working from.</li> <li>• Specific priorities around <b>marine environments</b> are missing from headline narratives.</li> <li>• Several stakeholders noted again that <b>biodiversity should be better-represented</b> within the strategic priorities, and that the benefits are emphasised to as to ensure synergy between <b>biodiversity net gain</b> and <b>carbon storage</b>.</li> <li>• <b>R&amp;D</b> for the <b>identification and implementation of technologies</b> that will support the shift to net zero is mentioned in the Routemap, but <b>not well-defined</b>.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating <b>renewable energy measures on farms</b>, such as solar panels and wind turbines, was <b>not fully-explored</b>; there is the possibility of making the <b>link</b> between the <b>Agri</b> and <b>Energy</b> sections stronger.</li> <li>• Need for <b>better planning policy</b> around the installation of wind turbines and ground solar panels to <b>enable easier installation</b> and thus <b>improve engagement</b> with the farming community.</li> <li>• The <b>notion of ‘productivity’</b> will need to be <b>nuanced</b> to take into account the differences between upland and lowland farms – for the uplands, it is crucial that it is framed as <b>improving business viability</b>, which may mean producing fewer livestock in-line with the maximum sustainable output of the land.</li> <li>• <b>Support for landowners/managers</b> was noted by several stakeholders in order to <b>help them transition</b>; information is needed around <b>new legislation</b> and <b>business practices</b>, helping farmers understand their role in a carbon-negative future. Supporting the development and implementation of <b>new skills and technology</b> was noted as a particular priority, and case studies could be a mechanism for this.</li> <li>• Supporting a <b>shift in cropping patterns</b> to include <b>more legumes</b> and <b>cover cropping</b> was noted as a potential opportunity by several stakeholders.</li> <li>• One stakeholder emphasised that whilst our natural capital and landscapes are owned by a small number of people, the wider community use, visit, and benefit from them, so there should be <b>shared responsibility</b> and <b>decision-making</b> around landscapes that <b>involves the local communities</b>.</li> <li>• One stakeholder noted that facilitating <b>supply chain projects</b> for new agricultural opportunities could be a <b>major opportunity</b>, such as seaweed being useful as cattle feed and bio-fertiliser, as well as assisting with carbon capture.</li> </ul>
<p>Are we focusing on the most impactful interventions in the Land Use, Agriculture &amp; Marine Sector Action Plan (“How” section)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Marine could be better-emphasised</b> within the interventions, and a key action to <b>identify key habitat enhancements/key ecosystems</b> was needed to support long-term investment.</li> <li>• One stakeholder felt that <b>investment in R&amp;D</b> to support the interventions in the Routemap could be made clearer.</li> <li>• The ‘whole farm’ approach <b>mainly focuses on improving manure management – other approaches</b>, such as circular economy measures, green manures, and alternative fertilisers, <b>should be referenced</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Some ambitions</b> – such as manure management and reducing food waste – are <b>not clearly aligned to the ‘How’ section</b>.</li> <li>• The objectives are possibly <b>overly-quantitative</b>; emphasising <b>maintenance</b> of what we have, the <b>quality</b> of what is created, and a focus on ensuring the <b>gains are maintained</b> would be beneficial.</li> <li>• <b>Hedgerow restoration</b> could be more effective than planting new hedges.</li> <li>• One stakeholder felt that there should be <b>more focus on food production</b> throughout the strategy.</li> <li>• It was noted that <b>farming</b> as a sector is <b>currently facing an uncertain future</b>, and that <b>farmers need confidence</b> to be able to invest in their sites and plan for the future. Therefore, <b>communication of the opportunities</b> is critical, and must be an <b>attractive proposition</b> to farmers.</li> <li>• Farms have been highlighted as ‘test beds’ for some measures – these interventions need <b>planning to ensure all risk does not rest with the farmer</b>.</li> <li>• There was a question raised around the proposed research into the <b>loss of local abattoirs</b>, and whether this is a significantly <b>meaningful climate action</b>.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was <b>support</b> for the proposed <b>action around ELMS</b>, but that farmers should be able to access <b>free support</b> for the <b>application process</b>/claiming back costs originally awarded.</li> <li>• Concern that an ambition and intervention for <b>reducing meat and dairy farming</b> had been missed.</li> <li>• Need for interventions around <b>reducing meat consumption</b>, rather than production, and <b>consumption should emphasise the local, quality aspect</b> of Yorkshire meat and dairy.</li> </ul>
<p>Do you feel there are any gaps in the interventions to ensure York &amp; North Yorkshire reaches net zero by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Marine</b> was again raised as a <b>missed opportunity</b> – there is a need for <b>more knowledge</b> around <b>key environments</b> (e.g. kelp forests) so that the best interventions can be built.</li> <li>• Also raised again was the <b>need to communicate</b> the benefits of blending <b>biodiversity net gain with net zero</b>. There was a suggestion of a piece of work on building/living with nature in urban and sub-urban environments, potentially best practice guidelines and exemplar projects, including community-led initiatives.</li> <li>• The <b>agricultural sector is in a period of uncertainty</b> and policy/funding changes, so there is a need for <b>clear, simple communication</b> around new programmes and opportunities. It was noted that the full information on some schemes – including LNRS, ELMS, and SFI – is still not available, and that the landscape recovery level of ELMS is only for sites over 500 hectares, shutting out many farmers.</li> <li>• Future schemes must be <b>simple, accessible, and attractive to farmers</b>.</li> <li>• Multiple stakeholders noted that there were <b>gaps in the lists of current programmes</b> and the following should be added:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>NYMNPA NEIRF</b> – Esk Valley, combining landscape opportunity mapping with farm engagement to develop knowledge of what is possible, feasible, and wanted.</li> <li>- <b>Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected</b> is mentioned under peat restoration but is delivering a much wider range of interventions (changing farming practice; new woodland; soil carbon etc) so should be includes a separate programme;</li> <li>- <b>York Flood Resilience Innovation</b> project;</li> <li>- <b>Revere</b> - partnership of NPAs with Palladium to catalyse private finance for landscape change/restoration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Wider <b>land-use opportunity mapping</b> is needed to build on existing data, as this will help <b>maximise buy-in</b> and chance of success.</li> <li>• There is a <b>lack of structured knowledge transfer/exchange</b> in agriculture, which is a <b>key limiting factor</b> to change. This barrier is difficult to tackle, but <b>collaborative projects</b> between NPAs, AHDB, NFU, Yorkshire Ag Society, colleges like Askham Bryan, private sector advisors, companies like Arla, could offer <b>‘best practice’</b> or case study examples.</li> <li>• Creating <b>‘usable’ communications</b> was highlighted in a couple of areas - such as ensuring that the <b>Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is informative for land managers</b>, and that interventions such as the <b>farm carbon audits</b> are linked to advice with demonstrates the <b>economic and environmental benefits</b> of moving to a more sustainable output.</li> <li>• One stakeholder felt that there should be <b>more focus on skills development</b> and provision of <b>green technology</b> in education in agriculture and agri-tech sectors.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another stakeholder felt that the interventions were <b>somewhat limited</b> and there should be a priority to significantly <b>reduce land set aside for animal farming</b>, for both climate and health reasons.</li> <li>• <b>Carbon credit</b> measurement and authority retaining carbon credits earned in the region, for the region.</li> <li>• It was noted that the Ukraine war and withdrawal of Russian gas may prioritise <b>wind and solar power as energy sources</b>.</li> </ul>
<p>Please detail below any further feedback that you would like to provide on this section.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>marine element</b> of this section needs to be <b>fully-embedded</b> in the Routemap. Linking marine environments to other parts of the document could be beneficial in achieving this – e.g. we need to see the <b>marine environment as an asset</b>, not a commodity, and this shift sits well under ‘Creating Systems Change’.</li> <li>• Again, as noted previously, the <b>agricultural sector</b> is facing a period of <b>significant pressure, upheaval, and uncertainty</b>, and this could be a barrier to change, particularly when it affects cash flow. Policies must be developed to help give farmers the <b>confidence and certainty</b> they need.</li> <li>• It was noted that there was possibly a place within the Routemap for a <b>section focusing on waste</b>, where priorities and actions around <b>resource use, recycling, and circular economy</b> could be fully-explored. The issue of <b>domestic waste</b> has not been fully-explored, and the <a href="#">Government funding to enable food waste</a> collection has not been referenced.</li> <li>• One the subject of <b>vertical farms</b>, P3P and Perfectly Fresh have planning permission to build a 5000m2 indoor vertical farm in Selby, near Drax, offering the potential to <b>share lessons learnt</b>.</li> </ul>
<p>Key Actions</p>	<p><u>All feedback has been reviewed and will be addressed where deemed appropriate and feasible. Headline actions from the consultation include:</u></p> <p><b>Update narrative and strategic priorities:</b> to address key concerns raised from the consultation (including better integrating circular economy principles, the importance of biodiversity and expanding the marine section).</p> <p><b>Further partner &amp; stakeholder engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>“Marine &amp; Coastal” workshop:</b> session with key stakeholders to further develop marine and coastal priorities and interventions (June).</li> <li>• <b>Grow Yorkshire Steering Group:</b> meeting to discuss agriculture related-feedback from the consultation (including, engagement and communication with farmers; skills; impact of policy uncertainty; and developing further interventions). (May)</li> <li>• <b>“Natural Capital” workshop:</b> session with key stakeholders to discuss land use related feedback (including biodiversity, plant health and woodland planting).</li> </ul>