



Defra Optimising Delivery & Regulatory Reform

Commissioners Board

Corry & Hancock - Background

Corry Review

- **Five strategic themes:** Focus on outcomes, simplify "green tape", consistent compliance, unlock green finance, and modernise regulators
- **29 recommendations** aimed at aligning regulation with both **economic growth and nature recovery**, without major institutional overhaul
- Emphasises **constrained discretion** for regulators, **place-based outcomes**, and better integration with the **Environmental Improvement Plan**

Hancock Review

- **Refocus on outcomes:** Advocates for a shift from rigid, site-specific regulation to **place-based, outcome-driven approaches** that support both **nature recovery and economic growth**
- **Constrained discretion for regulators:** Recommends empowering regulators with **clear strategic goals** and **flexibility** to make context-sensitive decisions, while maintaining accountability and legal compliance
- **Systemic reform, not institutional overhaul:** Proposes **streamlining guidance**, aligning with the **Environmental Improvement Plan**, and creating a **Defra Infrastructure Board** to support major projects and reduce regulatory delays

Defra Optimising Delivery & Regulatory Reform

Theme	What this means
Unlocking Infrastructure	New infra board in Defra to ensure that large scale projects are treated in a coherent manner across Defra Gp rather than piecemeal.
Place-based delivery	More joined up working in the regions with other ALBs and NGOs. Testing approach through various trials.
Regulatory Reform	Take a more risk-based approach and reform regulation through a growth and building new homes lens. Give earned recognition to some trusted partners
Improving efficiency	Deliver £144m of embedded efficiencies – focus on regulation, corporate services, grant management and communications. Digital & AI enabling this.
Green finance	Focus on nature market schemes eg BNG, Carbon.
Strategic direction & accountability	Reset governance in Defra – more delivery focused. Review roles & responsibilities eg Sponsor and Deliverer.

What are we doing?

Theme	What this means to the FC
Unlocking Infrastructure	Whereas the FC does not have large projects, this could be an opportunity on funding when non-delivery may be known sooner in the FY
Place-based delivery	Engaging with the trials – initial focus on scheme in Yorkshire
Regulatory Reform	Open to reform where it makes sense. Earned recognition?
Improving efficiency	Engaging with Defra Gp reform, but also delivering our own portfolio
Green finance	Our own strategic opportunity but also FE freedoms
Strategic direction & accountability	FC and NETL trial on reviewing roles and responsibilities