

## Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

### SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

#### 1A. Name of Public Authority.

DAERA - CAFRE

#### 1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Farming for Sustainability– Knowledge Transfer scheme as part of DAERA's Farm Support and Development Programme.

#### 1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

#### 1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

*Farming for Sustainability – Knowledge scheme*

#### 1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

*Farming for Sustainability* is a Knowledge Transfer (KT) scheme aimed at providing farm businesses with the technical knowledge required to adapt to and benefit from DAERA's Farm Support and Development Programme (FSDP). The scheme contains three different levels of KT (Information, Training and Peer Learning Groups) so that farm businesses have a range of options to meet needs regarding level of knowledge required.

**1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?**

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

*Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.*

N/A

*Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.*

N/A

*Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.*

N/A

## SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

**2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?**

Yes  No  If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

**2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.**

This scheme is likely to impact positively on rural areas as it provides farm businesses with technical knowledge on a number of levels. Information technical material presented as videos and written material that can be viewed/read with a regular newsletter available to all businesses. Training composes short courses, primarily delivered digitally but with some face-to-face access. Peer learning groups are designed for those businesses requiring the greatest change to meet the aims of the FDSP and participants are supported through group participation and associated mentoring. The scheme will have an impact on virtually all farmers in Northern Ireland as it supports DAERA's FSDP which is designed to deliver four main outcomes: an industry which pursues increased agricultural productivity as a means to sustained profitability, is environmentally sustainable, displays improved resilience to external shocks and which operates an effective functioning supply chain.

**2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.**

This scheme is focused on developing all farm businesses. There is no evidence to suggest there will be a negative effect on people from rural or urban areas.

**2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.**

Rural Businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text"/>

**If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.**

**2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.**

N/A

## SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

**3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?**

Yes  No  If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

**3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.**

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.**

Farming for Sustainability Business Case

DAERA Strategic Plan Pan to 2050

DAERA Business Plan

DAERA's Knowledge Framework

Future Agricultural Policy Consultation December 2021

DAERA Equality Indicators 2018

DAERA publications Statistical Review of Northern Ireland 2020

DAERA Agricultural Policy Stakeholder Group

Research Papers including:

Farmer Education: What we know and why it matters. P Caskie, C Jack, H Manolova, AFBI Economics Research

Assessing the Impact of Participatory Extension Programme Membership on Farm Business Performance. Adewale H. Adenuga, Claire Jack, Austen Ashfield and Michael Wallace.

Agriculture 2021, 11, 949.

**3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?**

Agri-food is strategically important to the Northern Ireland economy, and as such, investment in cost-effective policy interventions to address issues affecting the performance, sustainability and resilience of the industry should be considered good value for money.

The workforce also has historically low levels of educational attainment and is less open to innovation and entrepreneurship than in other regions. Achievement at tertiary level or equivalent remains low for farm operators compared to the wider population.

More efficient and highly skilled farmers are crucial to the success of the Northern Ireland Agri-Food industry in meeting modern food production demands and sustaining vibrant rural communities and landscapes. The need for farmers to gain knowledge to meet the current climate, environmental and productivity challenges has been highlighted.

If the response to Section 3A was **YES** GO TO Section 4A.

**3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?**

N/A

## **SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas**

### **4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.**

The Gross Output from agriculture in 2021 was £2.43 billion with a Total Income from Farming (TIFF) of £501 million for the same period. The agriculture share of Gross Value Added (GVA) was 1.6% compared to 0.5% for the UK as a whole, indicating a greater contribution to the overall NI economy. In 2020, there were 25,900 farms in Northern Ireland, predominantly made up of Less Favoured Area (LFA) cattle and sheep (15,100), lowland cattle and sheep (5,200) and dairy (2,600) farms. The intensive sectors of pig and poultry (800 farms) contributed a combined turnover share of 25% of the NI total in 2019, indicating their relative importance to the overall output. Just over 1 million hectares (ha) of agricultural land is farmed in Northern Ireland with an average farm size of 40 ha.

Agri-food is strategically important to the Northern Ireland economy, and as such, investment in cost-effective policy interventions to address issues affecting the performance, sustainability and resilience of the industry should be considered good value for money.

There are no barriers to the delivery of a fair and equitable outcome for people in rural areas. The Farming for Sustainability Scheme is likely to have a positive impact on farm businesses in rural areas.

## SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

**5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?**

Yes  No  If the response is **NO GO TO Section 5C.**

**5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.**

The *Farming for Sustainability – knowledge* scheme has been codesigned with rural stakeholders to ensure the training and development needs of farmers were fully addressed. Knowledge Transfer is considered a key enabler of the schemes/measures as farmers will need to be aware of new developments and will require support to identify potential impacts to their businesses and to manage these adjustments. The pace of change will be demanding and the need for a well informed and trained agriculture sector will be crucial to successful outcomes and performance.

The specific Knowledge Transfer needs of a range of farm businesses has been considered to take account of different needs relating to farm size and complexity, age of farmers, rural broadband access and the need to offer a flexible provision with high levels of accessibility for those with a caring responsibility or a disability. This has resulted in a KT model with information, training and peer learning Groups providing a range of options and delivery methods to meet the needs of those impacted

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES GO TO Section 6A.**

**5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.**

N/A

## SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

**6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.**

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.



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<b>Division/Branch</b>	KTIPB (CAFRE)
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<b>Signature:</b>	<i>M. McKendry</i>
<b>Date:</b>	19/11/2024