

Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance, please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Version 2: amended 11 August 2021

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Tree and Woodland Policy
Brief description of proposal	Proposals for the development and adoption of a Tree and Woodland Policy for North Yorkshire Council (NYC). This will draw on best practice in the sector to ensure consistent, safe, and the sustainable management of trees across the county.
Directorate	Environment
Service area	Parks & Countryside
Lead officer	Helen Arnold - Tree & Woodlands Manager
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Jon Clubb – Policy & Strategy Lead
Date impact assessment started	31 March 2026

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

The option to not develop a new policy and to retain legacy policy and guidance in relation to tree management was considered. It is recommended that this option is rejected as the opportunity and benefits of a harmonised approach for the whole of North Yorkshire would be missed.

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

Adopting the tree and woodland policy gives rise to no additional financial commitments for the Council, rather, it provides a framework for the delivery of the service.

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel		X			
	Emissions from construction		X			
	Emissions from running of buildings		X			
	Emissions from data storage		X			
	Other		X			
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		X				
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>		X				

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<p>Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving air quality by filtering airborne dust & pollutants and helping reduce the formation of smog and ozone. 		
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce temperature extremes by providing shade in hot weather and shelter in cold weather. 		
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to biodiversity and providing habitat for a wide range of other species. 		
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing natural forms that soften the hard lines of buildings in urban areas • Bringing character and local distinctiveness to landscapes and townscapes contributing to the setting of historic buildings and streetscapes • Providing screening of eyesores and privacy in residential areas 		<p>The policy aims to protect trees from unnecessary intervention which will contribute positively to all thematic areas.</p>

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing amenity value & seasonal interest through their foliage, flowers, fruits and autumn colours 		
<p>Other (please state below)</p>		<p>X</p>				

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

Assessment and management of trees will have regard to a wide range of good practice environmental standards including, but not limited to:

- British Standard 3998: 2010 Tree Work – recommendations.
- European Arboricultural Standards 2022-2025.
- British Standard 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition & construction – recommendations (anticipated update 2026).
- British Standard 8545: 2014 Trees – from nursery to independence in the landscape – recommendations.
- ISO31000 (2018) – Risk Management guidelines.
- HSE SIM – Management of the Risk from falling trees 2007.
- National Tree Safety Group - Common sense risk management of trees, second edition 2024.
- VALID Tree Risk-Benefit Assessment.
- Streetworks Volume 4 issue 3 2026 - Guidance for the planning, installation and maintenance of utility apparatus in proximity to trees (2008).
- Government Circular ROADS no. 52/75.
- Well Managed Highway Infrastructure (October 2016) – A code of Practice.
- Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A guide for Specifiers 2018.
- Technical Publications produced by professional bodies such as the National Tree Safety Group, Forestry Commission, Arboricultural Association, International Society of Arboriculture, Institute of Chartered Foresters, European Arboricultural Council, Trees & Design Action Group.

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The tree and woodland policy provide a clear framework for service delivery while delivering significant climate change and environmental benefits. Trees help mitigate climate change by absorbing carbon, improving air quality, and regulating local temperatures through shading and shelter. The policy supports biodiversity, strengthens habitats, and improves resilience to climate impacts such as surface water runoff and flooding. Trees also enhance landscape character, urban environments, historic settings, privacy, and amenity value, with management guided by recognised environmental best practice.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Jonathan Clubb
Job title	Policy & Strategy Lead
Service area	Parks & Countryside
Directorate	Environment
Signature	
Completion date	31 March 2026

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Karl Battersby

Date: 15/04/2026