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Letter of commitment to the priorities of the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice

I, Professor Dame Karen Holford, Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Cranfield University, confirm our commitment to the priority areas outlined in the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice.

Cranfield University fully supports the priority areas outlined in the concordat:

1. Leadership and system change
2. Sustainable infrastructure
3. Sustainable procurement
4. Emissions from business and academic travel
5. Collaborations and partnerships
6. Environmental impact and reporting data

We deliver against all the priorities in practice and recognise our responsibilities as a signatory, as set out in the concordat. As a signatory to this concordat, we recognise the need to change how we conduct research and innovation as well as promote wider solutions. We also agree to take shared action now and into the future to reduce and eliminate our own environmental impacts and emissions and achieve the transition to sustainable practices.

The concordat aligns directly with our institutional strategy and priorities. At the heart of our research is the drive to identify and deliver the changes required to achieve a brighter future for Earth. Every day our students, academics and researchers are working with industry and other organisations to deliver practical solutions that boost efficiency and reduce their impact on the environment. Working collaboratively, we bring together expertise from different specialisms to work with industry to combat the challenges they are facing.

We are committed to reducing our own environmental impact in the delivery of our teaching and research. Our endeavours are led by the Environment and Energy Committee, which reports into the University Executive and Council. With the support of a dedicated Energy and Environment team, we are delivering system change in line with our commitment. This is demonstrated through a range of initiatives, for example:

- Working towards a target to reduce single car community to campus by 50% by 2030 as part of the University 'Travel Plan', as well as reducing our scope 3 carbon emissions associated with business travel, including a target to reduce emissions from flights by 35% by 2035.
- Achieving a target of zero avoidable waste by 2030, with avoidable waste being 13.3% of our total waste (2024-2025), down from 18% in the previous year.
- Overall, energy used has decreased and overall energy efficiency continues to improve with less energy used per building floor area. Renewable energy generation has increased with the better performances from the solar farm and the biomass boiler. In 2024-2025 we saw a 16% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions from the previous year, for example.
- We continue to strengthen our procurement processes to include circular economy principles and sustainability requirements at each procurement stage
- Our campus is a wildlife rich setting, providing opportunities for students, staff and visitors to enjoy the benefits of experiencing biodiversity. As a landowner and a centre of learning we take seriously our responsibility to conserve protected species and practice what we teach. We are now developing a Biodiversity Net Gain strategy and action plan with total biodiversity action areas covering 9 ha (10%) of the Cranfield campus.

We regularly review performance against our targets and we will continue to drive improvement to our environmental sustainability as a signatory to this concordat.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dame Karen Holford DBE FREng
Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor
Cranfield University