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Dear Norman

Thank you for your letter dated 20 March, regarding flexibilities for carbon budgets. I am grateful to you for taking the time to raise this important matter.

The UK carbon budgets already set in legislation are among the most stringent in the world, requiring a 57% cut in emissions by 2028 - 2032 from a 1990 baseline. We are making good progress towards this, with emissions down 42% on 1990 levels, and have recently been able to confirm that we comfortably met the second carbon budget (2013-2017). The Government's focus is on ensuring we maintain that progress through the ambitious policies set out in our Clean Growth Strategy.

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) provide expert analysis and advice on both setting and meeting our ambitious targets, and on 15 February they provided advice on overachievement against the second carbon budget. We are currently considering their advice carefully, alongside representations from the Devolved Administrations. A decision on whether or not to carry forward the overachievement will be made before the end of May, in line with the Climate Change Act. I am sure you will understand that in advance of that, I am not able to comment further on the carry over decision.

As you mention in your letter, we have also asked the CCC to provide their advice on the implications of the Paris Agreement for the UK's long-term emissions reduction targets, including on setting a net zero target. The CCC has confirmed that they intend to publish this advice on 2 May 2019.

I am looking forward to working closely with the CCC on the fundamental decisions we will need to take over the coming years to drive forward our progress further. I would also like to express my gratitude for the important work of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee and I look forward to discussing Clean Growth with you and the committee members on Wednesday 24 April.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours ever,

THE RT HON CLAIRE PERRY MP
Minister of State