



Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

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**From the Permanent Secretary
Katrina Godfrey**

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Via email:
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Your reference:
Our reference: SCORR/0017/2021
16 December 2021

Dear Stephen,

STANDING ORDERS OF COUNCILS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE 'HARTLANDS CASE'

Thank you for your letter of 1 December 2021 regarding the implications for Planning Committee decisions in light of the Hartlands (NI) judicial review judgment.

You have requested that the Department gives urgent consideration to this issue and introduce early legislation which will allow Councils to include in their Standing Orders a provision excluding regulatory and quasi-judicial decisions from eligibility for 'call-in'.

I want to assure you and your chief executive colleagues that we are already considering the implications of the judgment very carefully and have also been engaging closely with colleagues in the Department for Communities (DfC) to consider what actions may be required. Without prejudice to the outcomes of that engagement, we can see that the issues raised are not confined to planning decision-making and are looking at whether they might best be addressed through changes in local government legislation. Like you, we would be keen to see a speedy resolution, whatever form it might need to take and you have my commitment that we will do all we can in that regard.

I will of course keep you updated on progress around this matter as it develops.

Yours sincerely

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KATRINA GODFREY