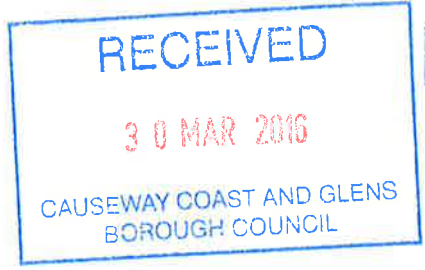


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Dear David,

In May 2016, the number of government departments will be reduced and there will be a number of changes to current areas of responsibility. Significantly, the Department of the Environment will be dissolved with the current planning function transferring to the new Department for Infrastructure. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) will also cease to exist as we know it. NIEA's environmental/natural responsibilities will transfer to the new Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) while its built heritage functions will move to the new Department for Communities (DFC).

While these changes will not reduce or diminish the degree of expert analysis and input to the consideration of applications they will necessitate some administrative changes. In order to clarify the impact of these changes for users of the planning system the Department has brought forward three technical Statutory Rules (SRs) which set out the new consultation arrangements.

The following SRs, made under the primary powers set out in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, will come into operation on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016.


- Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016;
- Planning (Hazardous Substances) (No. 2) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016; and

- Planning (Listed Buildings) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

When planning powers transferred to councils in April 2015 the Department provided a number of complete packs of the associated primary and subordinate legislation and advised that future updates would be the responsibility of councils. However, given the exceptional nature of the change in Departments and the practical impact on consultation arrangements as part of the development management process, I believe that it is appropriate to provide copies of the legislation in this instance. The copies provided reflect the number of packs initially sent to your council, including four packs sent to the council's Planning Manager. Further copies of the legislation can be obtained from [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk) if necessary.

Further information on the reorganisation of all government departments is available at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/changes-to-government-departments](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/changes-to-government-departments).

Yours sincerely



**ANGUS KERR**  
**Director**  
**Planning Policy Division**

Copied to:-  
Denise Dickson