



Heather Morrell
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Our Reference: 202600506047

25 March 2026

Dear Heather Morrell,

Thank you for your letter of 9 February to the First Minister regarding the recent refusal of a number of key renewable infrastructure planning applications across the North of Scotland. I am responding on behalf of the Scottish Government and I apologise for the delay in replying.

Your letter states that you believe that decisions about critical renewable infrastructure such as Hurlie Substation should be called in, given their national importance. The Scottish Ministers' [statement](#) sets out the general circumstances where Ministers may consider calling in a planning application. In practice, this power is exercised sparingly, recognising the importance of local decision making.

However, in this instance, Scottish Ministers recently took the decision to recall three substation appeals ([Hurlie Substation](#), [Emmock Substation](#) and [Carnaig Substation](#)) that had been lodged with the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA). This decision was taken as it was considered the applications raise matters of national importance in the context of National Planning Framework 4 expectations for Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot



Paul Lawson

PDD : Environment, Net Zero and Planning Decisions

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