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26 November 2025

Dear Clare,

Re: Historic Environment Scotland

Thank you for your letter of 20 November seeking clarification following my appearance before the Committee on 6 November.

In my evidence to the Committee on 6 November, I stated that I had not been invited to any meetings with the Board of Historic Environment Scotland. As I set out in Parliament on 11 November 2025, senior officials confirmed to me after the Committee meeting on 6 November that former HES Chair, Dr Hall, had requested to officials that I attend meetings with the Board. Dr Hall made these requests to officials during a meeting on 24 July and subsequently by email on 12 and 29 August. The invitations were not passed to me because of a number of issues running concurrently at HES which would have made a Ministerial meeting with the Board inappropriate at that time. These issues included an ongoing investigation into the conduct of Dr Hall, and it was essential to protect the integrity of that and other investigations within HES. Officials were considering the question of when a meeting might become possible when Dr Hall submitted his resignation on 29 August, with effect from 5 September 2025.

I recognise it may have been preferable to share this additional information with the Committee on 6 November, and I have taken steps to strengthen internal processes so that I am fully briefed ahead of Committee appearances. This includes reinforcing expectations with senior officials about timely escalation of relevant information. I am committed to ensuring that the Committee receives accurate and comprehensive information, and I will continue to monitor these arrangements closely.

Yours sincerely

ANGUS ROBERTSON

