



**From: Temporary Permanent Secretary**  
Mr Andrew Hamilton

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Ms Michaela Boyle  
Chairperson  
Public Accounts Committee  
Northern Ireland Assembly  
Room 371, Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
BELFAST  
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10<sup>th</sup> September 2015

*Dear Michaela*

**RE: PAC EVIDENCE SESSION - ADVANCED LAND PURCHASES - REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Thank you for your letter of 26<sup>th</sup> August in which you asked whether the preliminary judgement on the Helm case which was published on 5 August 2015 allowed me to provide the Committee with the answers to its outstanding queries.

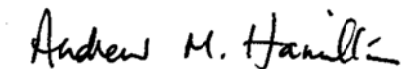
The Chief Executive of Helm Housing, Michael McDonnell, contacted the Department to advise on the latest position regarding the current litigation case. As you are aware, the judge has issued a preliminary judgement, based on the evidence of the expert witnesses, that the Great Georges Street site was over-valued and that the "true value" was outside the margin of error proposed by the defendants.

The next steps are that both parties to the legal action will consider the Interim Judgement and advise the court of their response. At this stage we have no indication of the likely outcome or how long it will take to fully resolve the issue.

There remains the possibility that the case could go to a full hearing with the factual witnesses being called. Should this proceed to a full hearing there is no indication as to when this would be scheduled for and how long it could last. As the case is still ongoing the Department is unable to provide the Committee with answers to the outstanding queries at this time.

I will however keep you informed if the position changes.

*Yours sincerely*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew M. Hamilton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

ANDREW HAMILTON

cc Ian Snowden  
Bernie Rooney  
Deirdre Ward