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**By Email Only**

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30 September 2020

Our Ref: JEW/33916/00001

Dear Mr Jenkins

**Transport and Works Act 1992  
Proposed Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order  
Request for Further Environmental Information**

I write in response to your most recent letter which was dated 18 September 2020 and received (by email) on 21 September.

In that letter, you note the Environment Agency's position (as conveyed to you by Sophie Page's letter of 11 August). You set out your view that, given the background of the applicant and Agency working closely together on the existing Flood Risk Assessment ("FRA") and the opportunities for the Agency and others to comment on the revised assessment, the new FRA will provide the necessary information to enable conclusions to be drawn about likely significant effects of the scheme with respect to flood risk even without the Agency's formal approval.

I am advised that the applicant has discussed the latest position with Sophie Page from the Agency, who expressed herself satisfied that the applicant's consultant, Capita, is very experienced and reliable, with no need for Agency oversight.

The applicant is grateful for your confirmation that the Further Environmental Information is to be submitted on or before 22 March 2021 and, as I advised in my letter of 11 September, Capita has already been instructed to press on with the necessary work required to produce an updated FRA. Information was requested from the Agency's hydrological specialists some 4 weeks ago and it is hoped that this will soon be received, enabling the initial hydrological work to proceed.

I am instructed that the applicant is confident that the 22 March deadline can be met or brought forward and proposes to revert to you by 30 October to confirm this, with a view to setting a date for the Inquiry and determining whether it is to be a virtual or blended event.

Finally, your letter suggested that the Planning Inspectorate had made a number of attempts to establish with me what progress had been made towards the preparation of the Rule 17 information. I have explained already that this statement was incorrect, and it was me who initiated

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the contact with PINS, after I learned from Colin Dunn that PINS had been in contact with the DfT's Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit, seeking information on progress.

The applicant was not able to embark on the work you had requested without a response to my letter of 27 July, particularly as the Environment Agency had indicated that it did not wish to meet with the applicant's team until it had received a response from you to its letter of 11th August.

The applicant is naturally anxious – as am I – to make it clear that there has been no attempt on our part to avoid efforts from PINS to contact me and/or to progress this matter.

Yours sincerely



**Jane Wakeham**  
**Partner**

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