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Robbie Owen
Partner and Parliamentary Agent, Pinsent Masons
Acting on behalf of Southern Water
Southern House, Yeoman Road,
Worthing,
West Sussex, BN13 3NX.

29th April 2022

Dear Robbie

Request for Direction by the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 35 of the Planning Act 2008 – Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project

Thank you for your letter of 6 April to the Secretary of State which submitted Southern Water's formal request for a section 35 Direction under the Planning Act 2008 ("2008 Act") for the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project.

I am writing under section 35A(3) of the 2008 Act to seek more information from Southern Water for the purpose of enabling the Secretary of State to decide whether to give the direction requested, and, if so, the terms in which it should be given.

The information being requested relates to:

1. Contribution of the project to Economic Development in the Hampshire region

Your submission provides helpful information on the contribution of the project to economic development in Hampshire. You refer to the national infrastructure strategy in pages 22 to 24.

A significant concern for this government, as outlined in our National Infrastructure Strategy and our Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper, is the issue of housing supply and its contribution to economic development.

Your submission does not make any mention of the government's home building objectives.

Please provide further information on the contribution of the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project to home building in Southern Waters' Western area of supply.

2. Potential interference of the project with land in the South Downs National Park

Paragraph 6.52 states that parts of the project may be located in the South Downs National Park. Paragraph 6.51 states that part of the project may pass beneath the River Itchen SAC and SSSI. Please provide further detail on the spatial plans for the project, and the effect of the project on the River Itchen and South Downs National Park.

In accordance with section 35A(4) of the 2008 Act, if this information is provided within 14 days of the date of Southern Water receiving this information request, the Secretary of State will provide a response to your original request before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day he receives the requested information.

Yours sincerely

Oscar Watkins
Defra Water Services

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