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Huw Merriman MP
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Dear Huw,

BAYEUX TAPESTRY

I am writing to follow up our conversation last week about the prospective loan of the Bayeux Tapestry from France to the UK in 2023. The situation is both complex and fluid, so I thought it might be helpful to set it out in writing for you and for Amber, to whom I am copying this letter.

As discussed the eventual conditions for the loan of the Tapestry to a UK institution are primarily matters for the French authorities, and closely linked to the refurbishment of the Bayeux Museum, which is the permanent home of the Tapestry. The first issue which needs to be resolved is the fitness of the Tapestry to move. Closely linked to that, and assuming it will be fit to travel by 2023, will be the conditions prescribed by the French authorities for the display, conservation and curation of the Tapestry when it comes to England. If, for example, the conservators prescribed that it could only be displayed without any manner of curvature, that would require an exhibition gallery of at least 74 metres long, which would immediately rule out many interested venues. Until we have answers to this and other such questions, no decision can be taken on the UK host institution, and that decision will be a matter for the French authorities.

I fully understand and welcome the interest in the Tapestry which has already been demonstrated by the constituents of both Bexhill and Battle, and Hastings and Rye, given their strong historical connections to the events depicted in the Tapestry. So I am glad you have already made contact with English Heritage, who are represented on a working group of UK academics and museum and heritage professionals which has

been established to ensure the success of the Tapestry's eventual loan to the UK, and any concomitant programme of public access and education. My officials attend meetings of this independent working group, and will relay information from the French authorities as soon as it is available. That will facilitate the decision on the host institution.

Amber Rudd

Jeremy

Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Cc'd Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP