



Defra Floods Casework Team
Nature and Place Based Solutions Team
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
Seacole Block
3rd Floor – South West Quadrant
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

By e-mail FloodsCasework@defra.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

Reference – Application by the Environment Agency Section 17 River Medway Flood Defence Act 1976

The CLA (Country Land & Business Association) represents landowners, farmers and rural businesses throughout England and Wales. Our members affected by the proposal have contacted us with concerns about the above application and its impact on their particular businesses.

We agree that flood risk management is imperative in this area of Kent. With the likely impacts of climate change increasing the risk of frequent rainfall events and subsequent flooding, we agree that measures must be taken to reduce flood risk, increase resilience and mitigate damage. However, having considered the issue and discussed the circumstances in this particular case with our members, we are concerned that the proposed works have not been undertaken with adequate consultation and discussion with the landowners and farmers directly affected by the proposals.

Any decisions on flood mitigation works that are likely to have a significant impact on the land or business of the landowner must be based on robust evidence and with all potential solutions fully explored. In this case it is clear that there are some outstanding questions around the technical analysis that must be resolved before a decision is made.

The CLA has worked with a number of members across England in similar circumstances who have previously had their land placed in 'washland agreements' where their land is flooded to prevent damage to urban areas downstream. Many of these members are now in situations where they are more frequently flooded than was anticipated when the agreement was made and have provided an invaluable service to the communities downstream, without adequate compensation for the damage to their land.

We would encourage the EA and Defra to ensure this does not happen in this situation, by basing this application on clear and robust evidence, consulting adequately with the landowners and addressing the impact of the scheme on the land.

We would fully support this application if agreements and mitigation opportunities are entered into before this application is confirmed and so would ask that this occur before any decision is made.

Yours faithfully

Tim Bamford MRICS