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Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date: 27 September 2019

**Amendment to the River Medway (Flood Relief) Act 1976**

I am writing to confirm that Kent County Council strongly supports the proposed amendment to the River Medway (Flood Relief) Act 1976, which permits water in the reservoir to be stored up to a level of 28.6 mAOD. This water level will significantly increase the volume of water that can be stored in the Leigh Flood Storage Area, reducing the risk of flooding to Kent communities downstream.

Following the flooding in 2013/14 that caused significant damage in the county, including to Tonbridge and Hildenborough, the County Council has been committed to supporting the Environment Agency to provide improved flood risk protection for the communities affected. This commitment includes a contribution of £2.5 million towards the delivery of the Leigh Expansion and Hildenborough Embankment Scheme (LEHES), as well as helping to secure the Local Growth Fund grant from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership that is also contributing to the scheme.

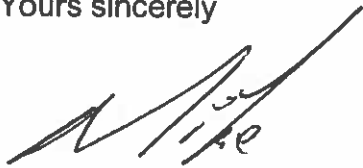
The LEHES will provide improved protection for 1,470 homes and 100 business in Tonbridge and Hildenborough and benefit other communities downstream. The scheme will reduce the impact a future significant flood will have in the county, reducing the disruption it causes and the time it takes to recover.

The County Council understands that there will be 16.4 ha of additional land around the flood storage area that will be affected by the increased storage level. However, the impacts on this land will be infrequent and the County

Council considers that the negative effects on this land will be outweighed by the significant benefits that the increased storage area will provide.

I hope that you appreciate the importance of this scheme to Kent and that you are able to support the proposed amendment to the Act.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Whiting', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**MIKE WHITING**  
**Member serving Swale West**  
**Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste**

cc Kathy Aucott, Environment Agency