

Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London, EC4A 1AB

The Rt. Hon George Eustice MP

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

11 August 2020

Dear George,

RE: The government's policy on flooding and coastal erosion

Thank you for your letter dated 14 July 2020 regarding the government's new policy on flooding and coastal erosion. The Commission welcomes the government's ambition to 'create a nation more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk' and its commitment to £5.2b over the next six years to reduce flood risk. The government's announcement of an additional £170m for fast-tracking specific flood schemes is also welcomed, helping to stimulate economic recovery post Covid-19.

The Commission supports action to reduce flood risk, and we are positive about government's policy to deliver a twin track approach in preparing and protecting communities from flooding.

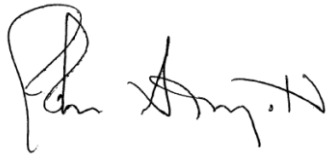
There is currently no standard for preparedness and protection from flooding. The Commission's analysis in the National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA) demonstrated that the benefits of a national standard of resilience to flooding outweigh the costs and would help to level up communities across the country. Our social research also showed support for a national standard, even though in some areas it would cost more. The Commission continues to believe in the case for a national standard for resilience to flooding, but we acknowledge that the government has chosen a different approach at this time.

In the new policy, we welcome the government's commitment to develop a national set of indicators to monitor trends and local conditions, so that progress can be consistently reported across the country. The government should use these to measure the level of risk reduction for each area, and to demonstrate it has achieved good value for money with its interventions.

We are also pleased with the government's commitment to review planning policy and building regulations. We urge this to lead to action in controlling development on floodplains and driving enhancements to property-level flood resilience.

We are committed to working alongside you in helping to safeguard communities from flooding, and to provide impartial evidence-based advice.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Armitt'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'John' written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name 'Armitt'.

Sir John Armitt