

13.04.21

Barden Cottages
The Green, Leigh
Nr Tonbridge
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Telephone

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To The Inspector.,
c/O Joanna Vincent
Public Enquiry Manager
Gateley Hammer

Proposed Enlargement of The Leigh Flood Storage Area

Dear Madam,

Our first concern is: That the proposal to increase the level and volume of water on the flood plain to the south of the railway will raise the water table in the area of the Village Green to the north of the railway embankment and cause flooding.

- When we have heavy rainfall (this year by November, some years by January) the ditch behind are property fills up with water i.e. when the water table is saturated and then overflows down the drive adjacent to our garden and into a gully on The Green. This stream can run for several days. See photo attached.
- Last year in 2020 surface water running down from the village side of The Railway Embankment found its way into the foul water drains in Powder Mill Lane and very nearly flooded several homes.

Our second concern is: The reliance on the railway embankment. When earthworks collapse whether in cuttings or embankments they usually do so dramatically and without warning.

- We would draw your attention to the landslide that occurred only a few miles up this very railway line between Edenbridge and Godstone on 22nd December 2019. This closed the railway line for two months

Network Rail is currently undertaking further drainage work on this line west of the village towards Morden

- Drainage issues are a constant worry for Network Rail in our area. For example:
Surface water from the very long Sevenoaks Tunnel is piped all the way down to Hildenborough Station and constant repair work has been necessary in past decades to avoid embankment landslips between Hildenborough and Tonbridge.

Our final concern is : How lorries will access this site. Our High Street is narrow and on the B2027 with parking allowed so that there constant traffic jams and congestion with tail backs extending back out of the village at peak times. If the proposal goes ahead then the heavy goods traffic would need to come off the A21 and in south of the village via Ensfield Road and exit the same way thereby avoiding the village.

- At night if lorries come through the village the noise reverberates off the high wall that borders 'Hall Place' and stretches the length of the High Street. This even affects us living on The Village Green. Last night Southern Water foul water tankers using The Flood Barrier Site woke us up at midnight, 3.00am and yet again at 4.00am!
- Our Primary School and the children's Playground are situated on The High Street. Apart from safety issues when traffic is congested there are real air quality issues for these children.

We look forward to your reassurance that the consultant engineers instructed have not only considered our concerns along with others but have the necessary experience to know that this Enlargement of The Flood Barrier is without risk.

In other words, 'If in doubt, don't do it'!

Yours faithfully

Jonathan and Sarah Cook

C.c. The Clerk, Leigh Parish Council; Jonathan Wade.