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# NEWS

## Protesters' victory in fight to keep sea at bay

By Charles Clover

A SCHEME to allow the sea to flood farmland adjacent to an estuary has been rejected by two district councils.

The Environment Agency, English Nature and the National Trust all backed the plan to create a saltmarsh in the Cuckmere estuary, East Sussex.

But a £1 million proposal to build up the banks of the Cuckmere river by a foot, which was tabled by the scheme's opponents, was accepted unanimously by Lewes district council and by 7-1 by Wealden district council planning committee. In doing so, councillors voted down the recommendation of their own officers.

Protesters said the proposed "managed retreat" scheme would have created mudflats not saltmarsh and interfered with footpaths that bring 450,000 visitors a year to the valley.

ABBE TRAYLER-SMITH



The meandering Cuckmere makes its way to the sea near Eastbourne. A scheme to let the river flood adjacent farmland has been rejected by two councils