

**From:** Isabel Offler <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 16 March 2025 15:46  
**To:** Richmond Local Plan  
**Subject:** PLAN MM44 FLOODPLAIN RECLASSIFICATION - RESIDENTS OBJECTION

**Categories:** Consultation Response

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to object to the proposed reclassification of Eel Pie Island into Flood Zone 3b, under policy 8 (MM44) of the local plan. I object on the following basis

I have been lucky enough to be welcomed into a family who have lived on the island for over 20 years. They have been upstanding members of the community not only providing architectural improvements (through building both personal and community use spaces) but also cultural significance (through creating art and music) to the island's already rich cultural heritage. They have played as headliners in the local High Tide festival and are featured in the Eel Pie Island Museum.

Upon arriving to the island, I am always struck by the community spirit and beauty created by it's inhabitants. They join together to support each other and to grow as a group. When members of the community are ill or unfortunately pass, I have seen intensive and genuine community spirit that supports and protects those effected. This island is a bright light in the local area. When chatting to people, as far as Somerset, I often find people asking about the magical Eel Pie island. It truly represents a version of life that most people want to live and be a part of. When my partner, who is disabled, has had surgeries, he retreats to the island. It is a safe place.

In my time coming here I have become much more aware of the tidal system. You have to become 'one' with the rising and lowering tides and begin to learn to have a coffee to bide your time before the river is crossable. Only once have I had to remove my shoes and socks to cross the river, it was refreshing and quickly forgotten. This has never in my six years of visiting and living on the island been a flood situation and the water dissipates around an hour after it arrives.

The Island has historically been in Flood Zone 3a, and there is no reliable or certified flood data which suggests this reclassification to Flood Zone 3b needs to be implemented.

Reclassification will drastically increase insurance costs, undermine property values and negatively impact viability for all of us who live and work here. The proposed change will have a significant effect on Islanders' abilities to improve their homes in coming years, and will also stagnate the flourishing of future generations on the Island, due to unnecessary planning restrictions.

At no point have residents of Eel Pie Island been invited to challenge or consult on this change, which is completely exclusionary given how the reclassification will affect our livelihoods.

We call for the retention of the current Flood Zone 3a status, which is both historically correct and site-specific. We urge the Council to acknowledge our Island's unique circumstances, reject MM44 and adopt an evidence-based approach to prevent harm to the future viability of our community.

May I also ask that in the future, island residents are brought into these discussions and considered within the consultation period for changes of this magnitude?

Thank you for your consideration,  
Isabel Offler